

Stories from Brethren Life

J. E. MILLER

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By J. E. MILLER



BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE

Elgin, Illinois

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By Brethren Publishing House

Printed in the United States of America

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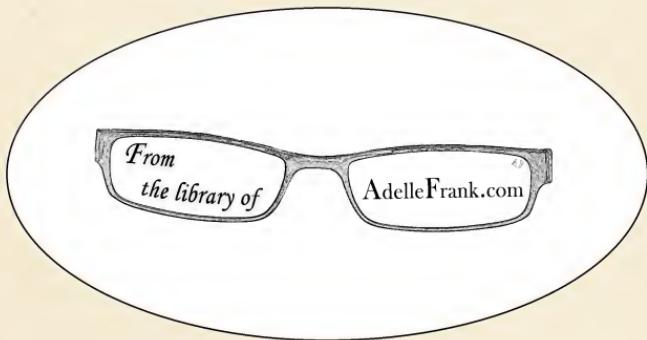
to

the Early Generations

of

The Church of the Brethren

Whose Simple Lives Laid Firm Foundations
on Which to Build a Christian Brotherhood



INTRODUCTION

Every people has a folk literature or fund of human-interest stories worth passing on to those who follow. The Brethren are no exception even though they have tried to live the seeming uneventful life of the upright. Their very trying has sometimes served to get them into unusual situations and thus resulted in unique experiences.

It is high time that a book of stories Brethren can tell should be written. Not only has much worth recording been forgotten, but some who can yet speak are coming to the evening of their labors. Not a few who read these lines know the author of this book. They know him as one with a penchant for recounting interesting incidents. They have found that to engage him in conversation is usually to find one's self listening to a story.

But the author's fitness for writing this particular book goes deeper than an aptitude for seeing unique and interesting things. His life has been spent almost wholly in the service of his church. He has known many church leaders and watched the course of important movements. Thus out of personal experience the author of these stories Brethren tell could recall much that would be worthy of a place in the permanent records of our people.

The author's special fitness for the task arises also from his long-time study of Brethren history. The results of these studies stand in books of biography like *With Williams Our Secretary*, and *Wilbur B. Stover, Pioneer Missionary*; or in histories like *Brethren in Northern Illinois and Wisconsin* and *The Story of Our Church*. Add to this the fact that he has helped others to plan ventures into the field of Brethren church history.

So, there was at least one more book due from the author's pen. His writing of *The Story of Our Church* helped to shape things toward that project, the writing of a book of stories about the Brethren; for the necessary research uncovered some things long lost; it served to refresh memories of incidents all but forgotten. And out of this came the stimulus needed to round out the author's historical writing with a book which would record the human-interest side of Brethren living.

Some of the stories are fully told; others are the nuggets which suggest that the field is far from exhausted. The reference notes, where these could be supplied, should prove valuable to those who may want to seek out for themselves something more of the stories Brethren can tell.

H. A. Brandt.

PREFACE

After I had written most of these pages I ran across two items of special interest to me. The first was a note by the editor of the Gospel Messenger for Feb. 2, 1901, page 72, which called attention to some reminiscences of the life of Frederick P. Loehr on page 68. The editor says: "Thousands of our readers will be glad for this communication. . . . We ought to have for the Messenger sketches of hundreds of our ministers who have crossed the river. . . . Who will write them? . . . It will be our pleasure to make room for them."

The second item was from the pen of Daniel P. Saylor as he wrote about the Beaverdam Church of the Brethren in Maryland. He says: "I will write of what I have learned of her history from my ancestors. . . . If I had considered this subject, while my father and grandfather were living, as I now do, I might have learned her whole history."

Mine has been a similar experience with reference to my ancestors, my home congregation near Milledgeville, Illinois, my state district and the Church of the Brethren at large. Many a time while I was gathering historical data I grieved because I had not asked my well-informed father for fuller information. When he was still living I did not realize the value of the material he could

furnish me, and, further, I was not then interested in such matters.

My parents' home was the stopping place for many visitors, church people from far and wide. From them I heard many stories of Brethren people. Some of these I have repeated again and again. Friends at different times have urged me to put some of them in print for the benefit of others. I have long found pleasure in reading the lives of others as they have appeared in print. Brethren literature abounds in these, but it requires pains and patience to discover them. Somehow stories arouse interest, clarify, explain and rivet in a way that abstract statements cannot.

The success of many with the spoken or printed word has been largely due to the stories they told. Jesus mastered the art of telling stories. His stories are known as parables. "Without a parable spake he not unto them." None can approach his skill in the use of the story, but all will benefit through a study of his use of it.

Stories have a way of growing as the years come and go. Halos circle their hoary heads. They grow richer and more meaningful with time. We may profit by the experience of others.

To discover the persons, to select the incidents, to whip the material into shape have been a pleasant task. If reading these pages will arouse in the reader a fuller appreciation of the sterling Christian character of the men and women brought to their attention by these incidents, my fondest hope will be realized.

December 11, 1941

J. E. Miller

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EARLY LEADERS

ALEXANDER MACK—PHILANTHROPIST

Alexander Mack was a man of means. He was master of his possessions. He considered his wealth not his own to be used for himself alone but a trust from God to be spent in the service of others. His wealth was a trust wisely administered. When his brethren were persecuted he rallied to their support; when they were poor he ministered to their physical needs; when they were fined and were not able to pay the fine he came to their rescue. Once rich, he became poor like his Master, that he might enrich others. This spirit of benevolence he instilled in the hearts of his followers.

The liberality of Adrian Pfau (page 18) is a striking example of the liberality of the early Brethren in Europe. The Pettikoffer Home in Germantown well illustrates this same spirit in the early days of the church in America. The eighteen Homes in the brotherhood are evidence that even today the Church of the Brethren has not allowed material possessions to drive a wedge between the needy and the rich. This spirit of stewardship and philanthropy Mack imbibed as he studied the New Testament, which to him was the very Word of God. In it he discovered the principles and practices of the Church of the Brethren.

Mack studied the New Testament. He discovered in it the church, her faith and her ordinances. He also discovered what he saw many Christians failed to discover, namely, that Christianity is a way of life, and that this way of life is not like the worldly way of living. He had a keen appreciation of the use and abuse of money and all possessions as portrayed in the New Testament. Thus he became a philanthropist and more—a Christian philanthropist.

Sources: History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 71-100. Brethren Almanac, 1871, pp. 17, 18. Pilgrim Almanac, 1873, pp. 3, 4. Some Who Led, pp. 9-12. Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 162-183.

PETER BECKER—PIONEER PREACHER

Peter Becker was born in Germany at Dilsheim in 1687 in a Presbyterian home, united with the Brethren in 1714 at Creyfelt, led the first party of Brethren to America in 1719, became the first church leader in America, organized the Germantown congregation in 1723, traveled more and organized more congregations in those early days than any other Brethren minister.

The Church of the Brethren still has more than three ministers for each congregation so far as numbers are concerned. This is so partly because the free ministry has played a large part in her history. When the first love feast was held at Germantown on Christmas night of 1723 seven of the thirteen men at the tables were ministers.

Someone should make a study of how and why the early church had so many ministers. Were these all called to the ministry by the church or were some volunteer preachers or exhorters as was George Adam Martin, who was baptized in 1735, did considerable preaching as a volunteer and had hands laid on him in 1739? Did the early Brethren take their cue from the apostolic church in which it seems that consecrated members were ready to proclaim the Good News wherever they went?

In his ministrations Becker was gifted especially in song and prayer. He usually led the songs; he wrote some hymns. He "is said to have been an inspiration to any religious service he attended, from the hearty interest he took in the service." The force of his sermons lay in the character and sincerity of the man rather than in the message and the eloquence with which it was delivered.

His moderation was known to all. The Libe trouble in Europe and the Beissel trouble in America weighed heavily upon his heart. He was for moderation, and was never an extremist. Patience and forgiveness were ever a part of his being. One of his hymns, consisting of ten stanzas of eight lines each, has for the last line in each stanza the one word *patience*.

He served the church without remuneration, working with his own hands as he tilled his little farm of twenty-four acres at Germantown and toiling in his tailor shop for a livelihood. His abil-

ity and labors have never been fully recognized by the church.

Sources: Brethren Almanac, 1871, p. 19. Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 200-206. Some Who Led, pp. 16-18. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 191-211.

ADRIAN PFAU—MODEL DEACON

When persecution drove the early church from Schwarzenau and Creyfelt many found refuge in West Friesland of north Holland. Their new doctrine of the old gospel met with favor and ere long many cast their lot with them. Among these new converts were some of rank and nobility. Among these new followers was one named Adrian Pfau, a man of means and of a big heart. Out of his own possessions he distributed as many as 100,000 Holland guilders, a guilder being equal, it has been said, to the American dollar. Whatever the actual value of the coin in those days it was a great sum for one man to give to the poor.

Abraham H. Cassel says that he copied the following from Mack's commonplace book, having found it in Mack's own handwriting where he records the death of this consecrated deacon:

“Died, in West Friesland, brother Adrian Pfau, God's chosen faithful overseer of the poor, who annually distributed 100,000 Hollandish Guilders, of his own means, in Amsterdam.”

How much sweeter will be the welcome of Deacon Pfau when he hears the words of his Master, “Well done, good and faithful servant,

. . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord," than the welcome of those who rained bombs and death upon Amsterdam in recent days.

Source: Brethren Almanac, 1872, p. 20.

JOHN NAAS—MAN OF PEACE

The church has lost much because she has failed to expose her membership, especially her youth, to the rich and noble heritage of her great men and women. Many are the monuments erected to the heroes of war. I will speak of a hero of peace—John Naas, who in 1717 refused to become a member of the bodyguard of the king of Prussia.

When the eyes of the king's recruiting officers fell upon the giant and athletic form of Naas, they asked, begged, reviled and then tortured him almost to death, but he refused to join the army. To the king's question why he would not be one of his bodyguard, Naas replied that he had given his life service to another king, and that king was the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he neither could nor would desert. The king was so impressed with the sincerity of Naas that he set him free and gave him a gold coin for his steadfastness.

Naas was a giant in every sense of the word—physically, intellectually, spiritually. That gave him strength of character. Some men hold ideas; these they can change or give up. Others are held by ideas; these they can never give up. When a man is gripped with the idea that this world needs peace, he will be as ready to die for that idea as is

the soldier who is gripped with the idea that through war we get what we must have. John Naas was a conscientious objector more than 200 years ago—a pioneer in that field. Fill the world with such giants and war will become a thing of the past.

Naas was a great preacher. He came to Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1733, and threw himself into evangelistic work. Built after the order of Whitefield, he preached with power. He was a poet and wrote strong hymns. He was the founder and shepherd of the Amwell congregation in New Jersey until his death in 1741. His body lies in an unmarked grave in the old cemetery not far from the church.

Sources: Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 213-220. Some Who Led, pp. 13-15. Brethren Almanac, 1871, pp. 23, 24; 1872, p. 15. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 100-130.

“FOR THE GLORY OF GOD”

On the wall of the old Sower print shop patrons and workmen saw these words:

For the Glory of God and My Neighbor’s Good

Here is a splendid motto, one doubly meaningful because the life of Christopher Sower was in complete harmony with the words on the wall. Sower had adopted certain principles and by those principles he lived and transacted business. In connection with his printing business he wrote to Dr. Heinrich Luther of Frankfort, Germany:

"My printing shop, begun on a small scale, is dedicated to God, and I hope in the life of myself and my son nothing will be printed here but what is to the glory of God, or to the natural and eternal welfare of my fellow men, and what is not thus I shall not print, for I have already rejected different orders, preferring to let my press stand idle; and I rejoice more over small pay for something that may benefit mankind than over great profit without a good conscience."

Again he says, "I am not a rich man, and do not yearn to be one, but I am regarded as rich because I always buy for cash. But I never loan anything except when I know that it will be repaid at the right time, or where a poor man has nothing and is helpless; there I forgive him in advance and keep no books. Therefore at all times my accounts are correct."

When Sower asked for advance subscriptions to his first Bible he set the regular price at 18 shillings, adding, "But to the poor and needy we have no price." Even here he placed doing good before making money. One sentence in his statement cannot be repeated too often:

"I would rather serve my fellow men and God in this wise than lay aside a great earthly treasure for myself, or for my present twenty-three-year-old son, who is of the same opinion as myself."

Sources: America's First Bibles, pp. 18, 19. Some Who Led, pp. 19-22. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 338-387. Literary Activity of the Brethren

ren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 183-199. Brethren Family Almanac, 1871, pp. 19, 20; 1886, pp. 5-11; 1898, p. 34.

ALEXANDER MACK, JR.—MAN OF LETTERS

Alexander Mack, Jr., the oldest of three sons born to Alexander and Margaretha Mack, was born at Schwarzenau in 1712. He accompanied his father to America in 1729. Naturally modest, he did not feel worthy of his full name so usually signed merely "Sander Mack." Physically strong, he labored till near the time of his death in 1803. He never craved money, but at the time of his death was the owner of some land. As a young man he learned the weaver's trade and built for himself a reputable name in business. He had a keen mind which was well trained. Uniting with the church at sixteen he at once became active in the church, being a leader in the young people's meeting held on Sunday afternoon.

Through the death of his father in 1735 he was deprived of his spiritual adviser. There followed a period of despondency and spiritual unrest. Believing that his days would be few he made his will, young as he was. Then there came into his life two of the hermits that lived near by. Together the three took up their abode on the Wissahickon. Soon they cast their lot with Conrad Beissel in his cloister at Ephrata. After six years at Ephrata Mack left the group and later he was again back in Germantown, reconciled to the church and in full fellowship. He became a min-

ister and in 1748 he and Christopher Sower, Jr., were given joint oversight of the Germantown congregation. After an apprenticeship of five years they were given full charge. These two men were closely knit together and continued so throughout life. Sower was the publisher. Mack was a prolific writer. Samuel B. Heckman, who translated and published Mack's poems, says:

"Alexander Mack was the most literary man of the Brethren Church during the first century of its history. In addition to his verse he wrote quite extensively in prose. He probably surpassed all others of his church, during his time, as a letter writer. He had a large circle of correspondents and many of his letters have been preserved. These are for the most part written to members of his own church, and relate to the affairs of the church. These letters show the kind and sympathetic spirit of the man, and show him to have been looked upon as a wise counselor and respected citizen."

Mack left among other writings two books published in 1788 at Ephrata. The larger one contains seventy-one pages. It is a strong defense of the faith and practice of the church "printed at the expense of the Brethren." The title is stated in forty-nine words. His poems consist of hymns and other poems. Some were published; others were left in manuscript form. Sower printed some of the poems in his Religious Magazine.

Mack also left a private diary which records business transactions and church and community

affairs along with private meditations. Of these there are nearly 300 pages. Each year from Jan. 28, 1772, to Jan. 28, 1802, he wrote a birthday verse. As he died on March 20, 1803, it is likely that he was not able to write on his last birthday.

Mack very commonly wrote under the assumed name of Theophilus. One of his longer poems is entitled Concerning Freedom of Thought. It contains 108 lines. At the close the author explains the use of his pseudonym:

"I hope that the kind reader will not take it amiss that I have assumed the name Theophilus, which signifies one who loves and honors God. In the first place, I assume the name in the living hope of becoming daily more and more such a one who loves and honors God with all his soul. Secondly, I assume the name not in any partisan or selfish spirit but in the hope that there may be found in the community many more such Theophilus' who hold in their heart a similar and blessed and living hope of becoming day by day greater lovers of God. To such these rhymes are dedicated for their honest approval and with God's blessing transmitted."

Sources: Religious Poetry of Alexander Mack. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 211-273. Some Who Led, pp. 23-26. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 98-101.

CHRISTOPHER SOWER, JR.

There were three Christopher Sowers. Junior was the son of Christopher Sower, Sr., outstand-

ing printer and business man of his generation, while he himself had a son named Christopher. Christopher Sower, Jr., was born in Laasphe, Germany, in 1721, accompanied his parents to America in 1724, was baptized in 1737, was chosen deacon at Germantown in 1747, minister in 1748, elder in 1753, and married Catharine Sharpnack in 1751. To them nine children were born.

He was associated with his father in the printing business from its beginning in 1738 till the time of the father's death in 1758. The most cordial relations existed between them. Recognizing the growing influence of the English language, the father suggested that the son take charge of the English publications while he himself would major in the German language. Since he was the only heir his father's estate was left to him. This gave him a good start and his wise management made him a wealthy man.

In 1763 he brought out the second edition of the Sower Bible, which was followed in 1776 by the third edition. He also printed several editions of the New Testament. Like his father he had an abiding faith in the Word of God and was eager to make it available to others. He had a deep interest in education and was one of the leaders in establishing the Germantown Academy in 1759, the first academy in the colonies. He long served as one of its trustees, and subscribed liberally to the building fund both in his own and in his father's name.

He printed the first German religious magazine

in the colonies. The Sower press put out three editions of an English-German grammar—1751, 1762, 1772—for the use of those Germans who wished to learn English. Not forgetful of his old teacher, Christopher Dock, he published Dock's *Pedagogy*, one of the earliest books on teaching written by a colonist.

Like all the early Brethren, Sower was utterly opposed to war and the civil oath. Because of his nonconforming principles during the Revolution his printing plant was sacked, he himself was imprisoned and shamefully treated, his property was confiscated without trial and he himself was reduced to extreme poverty. Friends came to his rescue by loaning him funds in his emergency. His diary records that these loans were all repaid. His daughter Catharine gave him every care until his death in 1784. Her brother Samuel, owner of a large printing plant and foundry in Baltimore, assisted her in caring for the aged father. His remains lie in the Methacton burial ground, marked by the old marker, and by a new one erected in 1938 by the church at large.

An outstanding event in the Church of the Brethren was the Sower Bicentennial commemorating the establishing of the Sower Press in 1738. At that time a large amount of Sower history was assembled, copies of which material are preserved in the J. H. Moore Memorial Library at Elgin, Ill. The play, *The Pageant of the Sowers*, was enacted in many congregations and was given a prominent place in the Conference program at Law-

rence, Kansas. The occasion stirred up not a little interest in the early days and enterprises of the Church of the Brethren. If this interest will be followed by a special study and presentation of the printing of the Bible in 1743, a renewed interest should develop in 1943.

Sources: Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 100-112. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 100-103. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 387-437. Brethren Family Almanac, 1871, pp. 19, 20; 1872, pp. 17-19; 1876, pp. 5-11.

ABRAHAM DUBOY

Abraham Duboy was born in 1679 at Epstein, Germany, was reared in the Presbyterian faith but united with the Brethren at Marienborn in 1712. With others he suffered persecution and finally came to America in 1728, settling on the banks of the Perkiomin in Pennsylvania. Here he continued in the ministry until 1738 when he was called to the Great Swamp congregation, where he served faithfully till his death in 1748. He was a forceful preacher, and a bachelor. He is said to have had visions and a clear presentiment of his approaching death. Abraham H. Cassel says:

"One morning as he arose he told the family with whom he lived that the time of his departure was at hand. He therefore dressed himself in his shroud (*Toden Kleider*), which he had in readiness, and desired the family to sing with him a

few verses of that beautiful hymn of Johan Arndt's, 'Nun fahr ich hin mit freuden, ins rechte Vaterland [Now I go hence with joy, to the true fatherland]'. They did so: then after a short prayer he reclined himself on his couch, which stood close by, and instantly breathed his last, without a sigh or an expiring groan. May we not all say: 'Lord, let my last end be like his?'"

Sources: Brethren Family Almanac, 1872, pp. 19, 20. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, p. 281. History of the German Baptist Brethren, p. 144.

JOHN PETTIKOFFER—BEGGAR

Brother John Pettikoffer was a poor man who was not ashamed to beg. It was a good thing he wasn't ashamed to beg for out of this condition came the first Brethren Home for the needy. Two miles from Germantown John had a lot. But what is a lot without a house to a beggar? In the spring of 1731 he had gathered sufficient funds with which to build a house on his lot. With this beginning others, mostly poor people, also built near by. Soon the group of houses was given a name. What was the name? Bettel Hausen. You don't know what that means? The name was very applicable to the buildings—Beggars' Town is what you will find it called in old documents.

Beggar John Pettikoffer died. Let us hope he was wafted into the beyond as was another beggar whose lot was much better than a certain rich man's at whose gate he sat many a day hoping

for something to eat. Fortunately the Pettikoffer home fell into the hands of Elder Peter Schilbert. For a long time the Brethren had been worshiping in the second story of the large house belonging to the Sowers. The Sower printing business called for more room, which meant that the Brethren would need to look for another place of worship. Brother Schilbert sensing the situation presented the house and a burial ground to the Germantown congregation as a gift, giving a deed of trust and naming as trustees Christopher Sower, Alexander Mack, Peter Leibert and George Schriber, dating the transaction Aug. 12, 1760. To make the house suitable for worship the partitions were removed. Thus the Pettikoffer house became the meetinghouse for the Germantown congregation until the stone church, still standing, was dedicated on July 1, 1770.

But what became of the Pettikoffer house? Its days of usefulness were not yet ended. Partitions were restored and what had been the home of a beggar and a meetinghouse for the Brethren became a home for homeless members. Here at times resided the warden of the church, we are told, and here the homeless found shelter. I like to think of the Pettikoffer home in Beggars' Town as the first Brethren Home, the forerunner of all the Brethren Homes throughout the brotherhood. I find a joy in thinking of the old Brethren pioneering in so many lines and leading in so many noble enterprises.

Sources: Germantown Independent, as copied in

Brethren Evangelist, Feb. 13, 1884. History of the German Baptist Brethren, p. 166. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 89-94.

MICHAEL FRANTZ—WRITER

Michael Frantz was born near Basle, Switzerland, in 1687, came to America in 1727, settled in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and united with the Church of the Brethren in 1734. As he came in contact with the Brethren their doctrine and manner of life appealed to him. He found both their teaching and their life to be based on the New Testament teaching. Before uniting with the Brethren he saw and heard much of Conrad Beissel, who, in establishing his own group at Ephrata, opposed the Brethren bitterly and proselyted wherever he could. This forced Frantz to study closely the teachings of both Beissel and the Brethren. When he made his decision he made it for life.

On the very day he was baptized by Peter Becker, the Conestoga congregation was organized with a membership of about twenty. Though a new addition to their number Frantz was set aside as the spiritual leader of the group and was authorized to preach for them. His faithful work inspired confidence so that the next year he was ordained and made the elder of the church. Such was his leadership that, when he died in 1748, the congregation had grown to about two hundred. Frantz was a good man, well informed, a strong

preacher, a wise elder and a good writer—a rare combination.

He wrote both hymns and essays. More than a hundred years after his death some of his writings appeared in the *Gospel Visitor*. Christopher Sower was so impressed with his writings that in 1770 he published hymns and essays under the title, *Simple Observations on Teaching and a concise Confession of Faith of the pious Teacher, Michael Frantz.*

As I make the round of workers in the Brethren Publishing House I meet two of the descendants of Michael Frantz—Edward Frantz and D. D. Funderburg—both ministers and writers, active in the Church of the Brethren.

Sources: Brethren Almanac, 1873, p. 15. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 82, 83. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 298-303. Literary Activity of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 206-213.

GEORGE ADAM MARTIN—NONCONFORMIST

George Adam Martin was born in Germany in 1715, was reared in the Presbyterian faith, secured a very fine education, came to America and in 1735 was baptized by Martin Urner at Coventry, Pennsylvania. He had serious religious struggles. His ability was recognized and he was given important work to do even before his church called him to the ministry. After prayer and meditation he decided to open his Bible and whatever verse his right thumb would land on he would

consider as God's command to him. His thumb covered 2 Timothy 2:15. He took this to be God's call. In 1739 the church called him formally to the ministry, in which he exercised freely and effectively.

He was a nonconformist even among his nonconformist brethren. He held his own views and was ever ready to express them. He did not hesitate to oppose strongly men like Peter Becker, Michael Frantz and Abraham Duboy. He finally found more points of agreement with Conrad Beissel than with the Brethren so associated with him, but did not become fully reconciled with the Ephrata movement. He was never rebaptized by Beissel as were others.

Martin left his imprint on the Church of the Brethren in two points that have remained with them. In 1737 when baptism was about to be administered he objected to the reading from Luke 14 as not the proper scripture to read at such a time. Peter Becker asked what should be read. Martin suggested Matthew 18. From that time Matthew 18 and not Luke 14 was made basic in receiving members into the church.

Martin attended the synods of Zinzendorf through which the latter attempted to draw the German churches together. Martin saw the tendency and suggested to Martin Urner that the Brethren hold their own synod which met first in 1742 and grew into the Annual Meeting of the Church of the Brethren.

He was the author of *Die Christliche Bibliotek*

(The Christian Library), a book of 156 octavo pages, which is said to abound in fine ideas.

Sources: Chronicon Ephratense, chapter 31. Brethren Family Almanac, 1872, pp. 15-17. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 269-273.

NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS

One of the great preachers of the Church of the Brethren was Peter Keyser of Philadelphia, who was the pastor of the Germantown and Philadelphia congregations for sixty-three years and elder for forty-seven years. Paul's words may well be applied to him for he was "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." His was a busy life.

He was a tanner by trade, strictly honest in all his dealings. "He was long a member, and for a while, secretary, of the board of health, inspector and treasurer of the prison, an active member of the society for alleviating the miseries of the public prisons, and was director and controller of the public schools [of Philadelphia] when the system was first adopted." But he allowed none of these connections to interfere with his duties and opportunities as a Christian minister.

Consider one of his busy days in the pulpit. The time—October 12, 1817; the occasion—the dedication of the first Church of the Brethren meeting-house in Philadelphia. In the morning he spoke on the text taken from Heb. 9:1-5; in the afternoon from Luke 19:4; in the evening from Acts 26:22,

23. Read these verses and note how applicable to the occasion. When he preached great crowds came to hear. They had discovered in him not only a great scholar, a great business man, a great preacher, a great humanitarian, but in short, a great man of God.

Not all can be as great as he was for two reasons: they do not have his natural qualifications, and further, they do not apply themselves as he did. It was long his practice to rise at four in the morning, and read and study until the hour of business transaction had arrived. It was his custom to have the open Bible on his workbench so that he might read and meditate on its priceless message as he saw it on the printed page.

Sources: Brethren Family Almanac, 1880, p. 9. Some Who Led, pp. 27-30. History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 103, 129, 130.

MEMORIZING THE BIBLE

Peter Keyser was baptized at eighteen, was called to the ministry at nineteen and preached for sixty-four years. During all this time he was active in business and in educational and social affairs. Though blind in later life he continued to preach as before. Those who did not know that he was blind could not have detected it from his manner in the pulpit. It was his custom to open the Bible, just as he would had he been able to see, and read an entire chapter without a single error.

How did he acquire this skill? By close and continued effort. He prepared for just such an

emergency when he little thought of future blindness. His theological training was secured in this fashion: His father was a tanner and young Peter worked steadily in the tannery. At the same time he devised a system of Bible study. Though not as systematic and comprehensive as a modern seminary course, it trained him thoroughly for the ministry. Abraham H. Cassel tells the story as he received it from Brother Keyser himself.

"I was well acquainted with the Rev. Peter Keyser. He told me some of his early life; that his father had been a tanner, and that he was early put at the bark mill for grinding. Above it he had made a shelf, on which he kept an open Bible, and as the grinding went on he would read a passage in it, memorize it; and so he would take up verse after verse and chapter after chapter, until he had completely memorized the whole of the New Testament. Of the Old Testament he memorized the whole of the Psalms, and the Prophets, and the five books of Moses—the whole of the New and the great part of the Old Testament."

A writer of eminent Philadelphians, speaking of Elder Keyser, says: "He had the most intimate knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, both in English and German, and it is doubtful whether any other man could repeat them more accurately than he. It appeared as though he knew the very words, verses and chapters of the entire Bible."

Here we discover the secret of the power in preaching acquired by many old Brethren ministers who never had much schooling.

Sources: History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 103, 129, 130. Some Who Led, pp. 27-30.

THAT STOLEN OX

George Miller was born in Switzerland, came to America when a boy and settled near Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. Here he joined the Church of the Brethren in 1753 and became active in the ministry. With staff in hand he would often walk fifteen miles on Saturday to preach on Sunday, and then walk home without eating more than a piece of dry bread. It was his custom to stop a few minutes at the homes of members, saying that if one should stop for only five or ten minutes they could not say that the brethren had forgotten them. Thus did he do pastoral visiting and show his interest in others. He was also a farmer and weaver and made it a point to talk of spiritual matters to patrons in his shop.

He was a man of deep and settled convictions. Once one of his oxen was stolen. He well knew where his ox was but did not lay claim to his property. He took literally the words of the Master not to ask for the return of stolen goods. His neighbors, however, had no such scruples and had the thief arrested.

While the thief was in prison Miller walked twenty miles to Lancaster to see him. The British law was that a thief should be whipped at the post. Fearing that his neighbor might be thus handled Miller was ready to intercede for him.

Further, the weather was cold and he desired to know whether the thief had a good warm bed in jail, intending, if he lacked this, to supply him with the same. One need not ask why the Brethren erected a new marker over his grave on the old farm.

Source: History of the Church of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 511, 512.

MACK'S BIBLE WITH NOTES

Should you drop into the library of Bridgewater College, you could look upon the Bible of Alexander Mack and see some of the notes which he and his son wrote on the blank leaves found in it. These notes are in German and the ink is somewhat faded because of age. In the *Gospel Visitor* of December 1852, pages 143, 144, the following reference to this Bible (evidently written by Abraham H. Cassel) appeared:

“ ‘The Operation of Grace in the Heart of the Sinner.’

“From the Manuscript of brother Alexander Mack, who died in the year 1735. (117 years ago,) aged 56 years.

“We have come into possession of the pocket-bible of that brother, which has some 20 or 30 leaves of blank-paper at both ends, containing manuscript notes of him, and of his son, who died in the year 1803 at the very advanced age 91 years, 1 month and 20 days. Both are buried at the brethren’s burying-ground in Germantown near

Philadelphia, Pa. From the manuscript of the elder brother, we give the following short notes at this time, and may continue, if acceptable, to give more hereafter.

“The first operation of grace in the soul is the true awakening from the secure sleep in sin and estrangement from God, and a knowledge of the poor condition and deprivation of the divine life, whence originates a hunger and desire in the soul after help, after salvation, after forgiveness, after righteousness. (Here is repentance described in the fewest and simplest words.)

“The grace directs (the soul) how in JESUS alone salvation, forgiveness, yea all things may be obtained, (necessary to the welfare of the soul; and bringeth forth in the soul true faith, upon which follows obedience towards him.)

“The following passages show us the kind of tongues of the Old man of sin: Sirach XXVIII, 13-20, Psalm V. 9, 10, and CXL. 4, Rom. III. 13, 14, James III. 3-10, Proverbs XVIII. 20.21.

“The passages here following, show the manner of new tongues of the new-born children and heirs of the kingdom. Proverbs XII, 14-19. & XV. 1-4. Solomon’s song IV. 3.11. Isai. XXV. 9 & LII. 7. Acts II. 4.11. 17. 18. and X. 40. and XIX. 6. Zephaniah III. 13. Revel. XIV. 5.

“[The diligent reader of his Bible will do well, to seek those passages, above named, and read them carefully; as we do not wish to prevent, but to promote the reading of the word of God.]”

JEREMIAH FELBINGER—A BRETHREN FORERUNNER

The Church of the Brethren knows all too little about those who lived and taught Brethren principles before 1708. Whatever gives new light on this particular should be preserved. In the early issues of the *Gospel Visitor* the editor has a series of articles under the caption, *The Church in the Wilderness*. In the issue of June 1853 he speaks of Jeremiah Felbinger as one to whom we are indebted. The following extracts deserve wider circulation, and the entire article may be read with profit.

“. . . we ought to say a little of a man, who lived half a century before our history commences, and who might perhaps be called the forerunner of our brethren. To this idea, that he was a kind of a forerunner of our fraternity, we are led by a treatise, bearing his name, which is put in front of a book, published by our ancient brother Alexander Mack in the year of Christ 1713.

“We know but little of this man, except what he says of himself in this treatise, and that he published also a new translation of his own of the New Testament on Baptist-principles. We are sorry to say, that we do not possess that translation, though if we mistake not, we have seen a copy of it many years ago, and believe some few may yet be extant in our wide-spread brotherhood. In fact, we know nothing of this author’s parentage and descent, of the time of his birth nor of the end of his life; neither do we know nor

have means to know in what connection he stood; whether he was connected with friends, sympathizing with him in his religious sentiments, and practicing them, or whether he stood alone, a witness of the truth in the midst of a wicked and adulterous generation.

.....

“We will now give the title of the book with the name of the author as we have it before us in a recent edition, printed in Lancaster, (Pa.) 1822, in the german language. We translate as follows,

“‘CHRISTIAN MANUAL, wherein is treated

“‘I. Of man’s creation, his fall and restitution.

“‘II. Of the reception of young infants into the visible church of the Lord.

“‘(This contains a strong argument against Infant-Baptism.)

“‘III. Of Holy Baptism.

“‘IV. Of Church-Discipline.

“‘V. Of holy Feet-washing.

“‘VI. Of the holy Supper.

“‘VII. Of the prohibition of swearing oaths.

“‘Dedicated) to the lovers of truth for their use and benefit at home as well on journeys and in company.

“‘BY JEREMIAH FELBINGER.’”

.....

“‘Done at Berlin (in Prussia) the 20th August in the year after the gracious birth of the Son of God 1651.’”

The fact that Alexander Mack published the treatise in connection with his own publication as early as 1713 is suggestive.

Sources: Gospel Visitor, June 1853, pp. 15-17. History of the German Baptist Brethren, pp. 15, 16.

THE DUNKER WAY

WHERE IS YOUR RELIGION?

For some religion is like a garment that can be put on or laid aside at will. For them religion is not a serious matter. For others religion is a vital part of themselves, ingrained and crisscrossed through their entire being, a vital part of themselves. Their religion shapes their thinking, their words, their deeds, their life.

This difference was forcefully impressed by the remarks of a certain minister in the Southland where tourists go for a milder winter. His statement was this: "When the Brethren come south they bring their religion with them; they attend church and Sunday school and are soon recognized as a devout people. When my own church people come south they come for a vacation, leave their religion behind and neglect religious services."

Rest assured that if you have religion, religion has a grip on you to such a degree that you and it are inseparable; it's a part of you; religion is your possession. If you merely belong to church your religion is only profession. There is a world of difference between possession and profession. He who merely professes religion leaves it in the meetinghouse environment, does not take it home, carry it into his business transactions or take it along on a vacation. He who really belongs to

Christ and has the indwelling Christ in his heart shows it wherever he goes.

THE TOUCH OF A GODLY MAN

"In my boyish way of looking at things I regarded Brother Gish as the best man in the world. I often wished that I could be just as good as he was. In him I had the utmost confidence. I thought that everything he did was just right. I cannot remember one thing he ever said, and yet I listened to his preaching with the greatest interest. I would have walked five miles any Sunday to hear him preach."

Who said these words and of whom did he speak? J. H. Moore, long-time editor of our church paper. When he said them he was sixty-four years of age, but the impression was made on his tender mind when he was not yet thirteen by William Gish, a Brethren preacher of Missouri, who used to come twenty-five miles to the Moore home to preach for the community. His stays in the Moore home on Saturday night left their indelible stamp upon the lad's mind, and the impression was for good. Listen to these further words concerning Brother Gish:

"My life became crowded with incidents, but in all my wanderings I have never gotten entirely beyond the influence of the godly man who assisted me to mount the steps and pass into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I would that all ambassadors of the cross could be

respected and loved as was this earnest preacher, whose visits to my father's family were the most blessed occasions in my early life."

I once heard J. T. Myers of sainted memory say that when he was a mere lad James Quinter was in the Myers home. When Quinter left he laid his hand on the boy's head, saying he hoped that this lad might become a preacher doing the work of the Lord. The lad never got away from those words as his long and successful ministry testifies.

What the minister says in the pulpit counts, but what he says and is out of the pulpit counts for more.

THOSE PIONEER DAYS

One often marvels at the way in which people forged ahead in pioneer days when means were meager, workers few and times hard. S. Z. Sharp gives us a glimpse of how this was done in Tennessee by one congregation or by a few men in one congregation. At the time this was known as the Oakland congregation. Listen:

"Until recently we were the southwestern border of the brotherhood. Our church organization is about seven years old, having forty-three members, twelve of whom were added during the year, and prospects good. Organized with eight members, and began the building of a church 35 by 40 feet. This church was built with but very little aid from others, and at a time when the entire

assets of the members were less than \$5,000. Instead of relying on other churches for help, we (five) brethren shouldered our axes and week after week prepared the timber and put up the building, a neat frame structure and one of the most comfortable in our state."

Few congregations would be without a house of worship, if they went at things as did these five men. It is still true that where the will is strong a way will be found.

Source: Brethren at Work, Nov. 15, 1877, p. 8.

"YOU'LL Go to HEAVEN"

Dunker thrift and honesty have long been proverbial. Long years ago one could hear: "A Dunker's word is as good as his note." And believe me, his note was above question. When he gave it he meant to pay it, and pay it he did. In 1893 I was a student at the University of Michigan. One night I helped to usher at a religious meeting in University Hall. Next morning after class Dr. Kelsey stopped me as I passed his desk and said:

"Mr. Miller, I saw you usher last night. I am always delighted to find my students active in religious work. Tell me, what is your church?"

I replied: "Mine is a church you probably have never heard of—the Church of the Brethren, more commonly known as Dunkers."

To my surprise he said: "The Dunkers? Certainly I know them. When I was a boy they used

to say when a Dunker lends money he hands the note to the borrower so that the borrower may know when it is to be paid. I always thought that showed remarkable faith in men and sterling character in the Dunkers. Tell me, do they still maintain that reputation?"

To be strictly honest I replied: "Many of them do, but there are exceptions. With them as with others you must know your man."

Here is a last-minute case. She was my helper in the office, kind, capable, reliable and absolutely honest. She had gone to the store and made a small purchase. When she went to pay for it she was short five cents. She suggested leaving the package for a return call when she would have the extra nickel, but the clerk insisted that she take the package and forget the nickel. She consented to take the package but said she would bring the nickel on the following day.

Next day she returned and handed the clerk the nickel, explaining the incident of the day before. He had dropped the matter, never expecting to hear about it. He accepted the money with these words:

"Lady, you'll go to heaven when you die."

That girl was a Dunker of the old type.

"DUNKERS MAY HAVE THE WHOLE STORE"

Jacob H. Hollinger stepped into a store in Washington, D.C., to purchase equipment for some Sunday-school rooms. At that particular time the

store did not have on hand the chairs that he desired. Obligingly the merchant said they would secure them in the near future. Hollinger gave his order and then asked whether he should make a deposit or give some other assurance that the chairs would be paid for when delivered. That was simply sound business and such a question always impresses a merchant favorably.

The merchant replied: "You Dunkers may have the whole store, if you want it, without giving any security."

That reply spoke well for the Church of the Brethren in Washington City. You have heard similar stories regarding the integrity of the Dunkers. Such a reputation cannot be built up in a day nor can a whole denomination secure it in a year. Back of it there must be years of upright living, honest dealing and prompt payment of obligations.

Because the Church of the Brethren has had this record it behooves every congregation and every member of every congregation to see that merchants of today as well as those of the past have no reason for changing their opinion of Dunker honor. You are the one to whom others look to maintain this reputation. Through you they interpret the Christian religion.

"You are writing a Gospel,
A chapter each day,
By deeds that you do,
By words that you say.

Men read what you write,
Whether faithless or true,
Say, brother, what is the Gospel
According to you?"

A SOFT ANSWER

Many will recall the music that was written by George B. Holsinger and the ease with which he led the music at Annual Conference. He was one of the great musicians of the Church of the Brethren. Nor was his work confined to his own denomination. As a teacher and conductor of music institutes he was widely known. His friends and admirers were many. He knew how to make friends and hold them.

On the other hand, there were those who envied him, were jealous of him and criticized him most severely. Some of his critics were free to express themselves by letters. In 1899 he received a very harsh letter from another musician who envied Holsinger's popularity. Holsinger did not at once reply to the letter but showed it to a friend who asked the privilege of writing the answer, saying that he would give the writer something to think about. He had not yet learned that "a soft answer turneth away wrath."

Holsinger would not consent to this, saying, "No, you must not do that, for all the evil we send out to others will surely come back to us in some form or other. I honestly believe this." He himself answered this letter as he had answered many

like it, in a fine Christian spirit. Such self-control bears the stamp of true greatness.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1910, p. 17.

“NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE”

A Brethren minister made the usual week-end purchase at his grocery store and paid the bill as presented by the cashier. When he reached home he checked his purchase and discovered that the cashier had failed to include ten pounds of sugar. When he made his next purchase he reported the mistake and asked that the amount be included. The cashier looked dumbfounded and failed to understand. She asked whether he wanted another ten pounds of sugar. Finally she understood and included the old item in the new bill, thanked the minister for his honesty and added: “It has never happened before that a customer has reported such a mistake and volunteered to pay the full amount.

The minister explained that he felt he should report and pay. “For,” said he, “if you had overcharged I would have reported it.” For that reason, if for no other, he felt duty bound to report when he was undercharged.

“Yes,” said the cashier, “that may be the right thing but they never tell us when we make a mistake in their favor.”

PRACTICED WHAT HE PREACHED

David Long of Maryland preached good sermons. He made them better by practicing what

he preached. He was known for his deep sense of what was right. His father had advanced him \$3,000, expecting to do the same with all his children. But reverses came and the father's fortune vanished. David's sense of right led him to share the \$3,000 with his brothers and sisters so that all were on an equality.

As a Brethren preacher he was opposed to slavery. Here too he practiced what he preached. Once he attended a slave sale and bought all the slaves sold. He did even more than that. He set them all at liberty. Under those conditions no one could censure him for purchasing slaves.

Source: History of the Brethren in Maryland, pp. 384, 385.

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS FOR THE POOR

Jesus reminded his disciples that they would always have the poor at hand and could aid them whenever they would. Some ever keep this in mind; some seldom think of the poor. When Jacob Reichard's will was probated in Maryland in 1808 this was one of the bequests found in it: "I give and bequeath to all denominations the sum of 100 pounds to be put into the hands of David Long or his successor for them to distribute the same among the poor and needy at their discretion."

This will shows three characteristics of the man: (1) His liberality; one hundred pounds was not a small amount in 1808. (2) His sympathy; he remembered the poor and needy in a substantial

way. (3) His catholicity; he did not confine his bequest to his own denomination, but included all.

Source: *Gospel Messenger*, April 26, 1941, p. 10.

THE LORD'S PORTION

To acquire, invest, spend, save and finally dispose of one's possessions becomes a serious problem as one goes on in life. In these particulars some have been wise; others have been otherwise. Some consider their possessions a trust and conscientiously endeavor to administer the trust honorably; others consider what they have as their own and squander it foolishly. Some are masters of their possessions; others are slaves to what they have. Each must decide to which class he will belong.

Joseph J. Oller was the son of a Brethren minister who at the same time was an upright and successful business man. Joseph also united with the Church of the Brethren and became successful in business. He was active in religious work and liberal in all good causes. He knew how to amass wealth, how to invest it and how to make final disposition of the same. His advice in business was sought by many. He was long a Conference auditor because his keen business judgment was appreciated by his church. His work as auditor was not confined to minor details but to broad business policies.

It was his practice to support liberally his church and other worthy philanthropies. On Jan-

uary 30, 1929, he signed his last will and testament. After disposing of his estate he came to the last statement, which read: "I earnestly request that you fail not to give the Lord his portion of your income." He knew the joy of dealing liberally with the Lord and desired his heirs to share in that same joy. As he looked to the future and stared death in the face he realized as never before that the shroud has no pockets and that six feet of earth is all that any can claim as their earthly possession.

DISPOSING OF PROPERTY

Browsing through the pages of the Brethren at Work for December 20, 1877, my eye caught these words: "Poor churches will find it to their interest," etc. Following this lead I discovered that Brother Zachariah Albaugh, late of Wayne County, Indiana, had left a certain sum of money which, according to his will, was to be administered by a committee of three throughout the congregations of the Church of the Brethren, providing those churches were poor and had in their membership or community other poor whom they could not help and who could not support themselves. The sum to any one congregation might vary from twenty-five to fifty dollars.

On the same page Elder J. F. Oller of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, recorded the death of Elder John Shenk, who had been liberal in life, and in death had left a certain amount as a perpetual

sum, the income from which was to be used for the support of the congregation.

Thus did these two men remember others in their dying hours and share with them a part of their material possessions.

FAITHFUL STEWARDS

I well remember the hot wind and grasshopper scourge that brought suffering to the settlers of Kansas and Nebraska in 1874. Calls for help were broadcast. Because Brethren from Carroll County, Illinois, had settled at Falls City and Morrill, Northern Illinois was deeply moved. A special district meeting was called for Dec. 8, 1874, to be held at Cherry Grove. "The Northern Illinois Relief Society of the Brethren" was organized with the following permanent officers: John Rowland, treasurer; M. M. Eshelman, corresponding secretary; Jacob Zuck and Daniel Kingery, auditors. The following resolution was passed: "Resolved, That brethren John Forney, sr., S. C. Stump, and Christian Forney of Falls City, Nebraska, act as a distributing committee for the states of Kansas and Nebraska." A plea was made for money rather than provisions. At the time \$556.27 was raised. This was materially increased from other sources throughout the district.

Some preferred giving provisions. At a set time these provisions were assembled at Lanark and were shipped to their destination. The railroads offered free transportation. There was no

N.R.A. at the time to prosecute deviation from set freight rates. Funds and provisions were solicited throughout the brotherhood. Some difficulties were encountered in freight shipments. J. L. Switzer reported that of twenty carloads sent only six reached their destination.

The church publications of that period gave much space to the Western sufferers, so much so that there was considerable criticism—and some harsh words. However, the accounts of those who acted as receivers of funds as itemized showed that after all needs were met there was money in the treasury to be disposed of later. John Forney of Falls City reported that for Northern Illinois there was a balance of some \$300 on hand. When the district meeting of April 26, 1875, considered this surplus it voted to recall the amount due. This sum was later transferred to the Danish mission project. Brethren have always been liberal givers to the suffering and their agents have proved faithful stewards.

THE UNCHRISTIAN SLAVE TRADE

The Brethren have always been practical idealists. You may not like that term but it alone conveys my thought. They were ready to meet conditions as they were. They did this on the slavery question. Your attention is called to two occasions when the question was before Annual Meeting.

The only minute recorded for the Annual Meet-

ing of 1782 deals with slavery in two phases. The decision was that a member could not hold slaves. But a specific case was cited. Brother Van L. had some years before purchased a female slave. She became the mother of four children born out of wedlock. Annual Meeting said he was to set the mother free in the presence of Brethren witnesses. Should she refuse to leave his home he might enter into contract with her to work for wages, but he was to "use all diligence to prevent such unchaste life, and lay it before her earnestly."

And what about her children?

"Concerning the children, it is also unitedly considered that he is to give the children free at the age of twenty-one years, and is to have them schooled and provided with food, raiment, and bedding during the period, as is just and proper; and when they are twenty-one years old he is to give them a free new dress."

Remember this was enacted in the year 1782, long before there was a Christian conscience crying out against slavery. The early Brethren were crusaders against slavery even then because they found the New Testament taught one great brotherhood of mankind.

UNCLE JOHN METZGER

The hundreds who called him Uncle did so because the goodness of his character drew them to him. When his grandparents migrated from Holland to America in 1758 and bound themselves out

for several years to pay for their passage, they little realized that later a grandson of theirs was to preach the gospel for sixty-one years. As a preacher Uncle John Metzger was powerful in his simplicity. Called to the ministry at the age of thirty-two, he preached his first sermon in a saw-mill to an audience of six.

You might disagree with Uncle John but you could never quarrel with him. It always takes two to quarrel, and Uncle John was never one of those two. He was one of five to locate the Annual Meeting for 1874 in Illinois. Two places were in the race for the location. When it came to the final vote, Uncle John said: "Those who favor the Filbrun farm go to that side of the road and those who favor the other place go to this side." Three went to the Filbrun side. Then Uncle John said to the brother who stood with him: "Come, brother, let us go to the other side of the road and then we shall all be together."

At his own expense he built a church at Cerro Gordo, Illinois. When the members objected to his desire to put a bell on the church he explained that he was doing it not to pattern after other denominations, but so that when a visiting brother came to town on a weekday and they wanted to announce meeting for him, the members in the country would know it by the ringing of the bell. His reasonable explanation satisfied all, and many were the times that bell rang.

When he transferred the church property to the congregation he wrote into the deed that no Sun-

day school should be held within its walls. But the children begged for Sunday school so he changed his mind and also the deed. In 1889, after visiting a number of congregations he wrote: "We wish yet to say, in all the churches we visited prosperous Sunday schools are maintained, which we have come to recognize as the nursery of the church."

Uncle John never was too set to change nor too old to learn—a secret some fail to discover.

Source: Some Who Led, pp. 66-69. Life of John Metzger.

THE TIME IS THE LORD'S

Our younger ministers are too far removed from the older generation to understand the work and sacrifice of the ministers of earlier years. Not only did those ministers give their services free; they also were among the first and heaviest givers when money was needed. When they traveled it was at their own expense. When they were away on preaching tours mother and the children carried on the farm work. Often it was necessary to hire additional help because "father was away preaching."

Daniel P. Saylor spent weeks and months out among the churches preaching. He was often accompanied by John H. Umstad, also a power in the pulpit. Frequently he was gone as much as three months at a time. Of course the conveyance was neither train nor automobile, but horse

and saddle or horse and buggy. As he bid good-by to his family a common remark was, "Now, as the time belongs to the Lord, I cannot say when I will return." Thus were the churches served and built up in past years.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1898, p. 7.

BETTER THAN ELOCUTION

In the Gospel Messenger for March 24, 1885, page 189, Dr. Peter Fahrney in speaking of two meetings says:

"Last evening Eld. John Knisley addressed the meeting. Today Eld. W. Arnold, of Stark County, Ohio, spoke. What these Brethren lacked in elocution, is more than made up by their simplicity and earnestness of language. It is a mistake to suppose that only learned speakers can entertain the people of a large city. The fact is, there is too much polish and a great deal of affectation about the popular clergy."

What was true then is true today. Polish, oratory, eloquence, beautiful language—all have their place and may add to the strength of a sermon, but there are no substitutes for earnestness, sincerity and simplicity of language. There was good reason why the common people heard Jesus gladly: he used their language and was true blue all the way through. There was good reason why Moody, though he butchered every rule of the English language, still won and held the attention of millions: his message came from his heart and he

believed thoroughly what he said. Our preachers of old, though not school trained, had hearts that felt and their messages caused others to feel and act.

“STICK TO YOUR CHURCH”

When D. L. Miller was in business in Polo, Illinois, he was elected clerk of the town board at a salary of \$100 a year. He was well qualified for the job and would gladly have performed its obligations, but the prevailing opinion of the Brethren was that he should not continue in the office as it was entering politics. He well knew that it would not in any way interfere with his Christian life but out of deference to his brethren he resigned from the office.

Shortly after he had resigned the editor of the local paper said to him: “Brother Miller, you gave up that job at the instance of your church. What I want to say to you is, Stick to your church. It needs men like you.”

D. L. gave up the job because he loved his church. All through life he remembered the incident and devoted his efforts and his means to promote the church to which he had given his allegiance. This does not mean that he was narrow-minded or that he did not recognize the good in others. It means that he had made his choice and through the church of his choice he would make his contribution and do his work.

Source: Yearbook, 1922, p. 59.

APPRECIATES HIS BRETHREN BACKGROUND

A successful salesman frequently stops at my desk for a friendly chat when he makes a regular call at the Brethren Publishing House. He was reared in a typical Brethren home where the abiding virtues were taught and lived. We both agreed that years had taught us to appreciate the priceless heritage from such a home, though when we were youngsters some of the training was not to our liking. Unbosoming his inner self, Ira L. Myers—for such is his name—told me what that early training means to him today as he meets all classes of people under all kinds of conditions.

In enumerating the values that came to him through his parents' Christian home he included telling the truth, frankness, the dignity of toil, rendering value received to an employer, the choice of companions (including a life companion), building a Christian home, so rearing children that they choose to live the clean life, the goodness of God and responsibility to and reverence for him, and sharing in the activities and responsibilities of the community.

Leaving the home he drifted to the city. The time came when he applied for church membership in the Pilgrim Congregational church of Chicago. Up to this time he had attended Sunday school and church services but had never made an open confession. He and others were examined for church membership at the same time. In speaking of those about to be received as mem-

bers the pastor, a Londoner, said something like this:

"Among those whom we are about to receive into the membership of this church is one for whom I can vouch as he may not be known to some of you. He comes from a Dunkard background. The Dunkards are a small denomination, not so well known, but one for which I have profound respect as I have learned to know them. In Dunkard homes you will find those basic family virtues that produce clean and strong character in the children. Self-control, obedience to parents, regard for law and reverence towards God are so implanted in early years that the children grow up to be law-abiding and upright. As these children grow up they establish the same kind of home as the one in which they were reared."

"That," said Ira, "impressed anew on my heart my priceless home training which has helped me to avoid pitfalls that swallow up so many. I can never get away from my Brethren training. I do not want to. It is too valuable."

PREACHERS AND SERMONS

A PREACHER NEVER KNOWS

A preacher never knows what impression his sermon may make on his audience as a whole or on certain individuals in the audience. Neither does he know what may result from the sermon or from special statements in it. His responsibilities are great and equally great are his opportunities as he stands before his congregation to present the cause of his Savior. Unless he is about to plead the cause of his Christ he has no excuse for being in the pulpit.

It wasn't a big meeting. There were not many converts. Only little Bobbie Moffatt responded to the invitation that night. No one, not even the preacher, suspected that some day the entire world would be interested in Bobbie Moffatt's decision. Bobbie became the great missionary, Robert Moffatt.

One evening in 1899 George Carl chanced to preach in Belleville, Kansas. At the close of the sermon he felt impressed to give an invitation for those who had not yet done so to make an open confession of their Savior. Two responded, one of whom was J. H. B. Williams, later secretary of the General Mission Board of the Church of the Brethren. In his world pilgrimage of the mission fields he became sick, died and was buried at Mombasa, Africa.

His was not a long but a useful, consecrated life. That sermon and chance invitation by George Carl proved a golden milestone in the life of Brother Williams. Who knows how many Moffatts and Williamses are not set to a great task because a blind ministry did not urge decision at the opportune time?

KNEW HE COULDN'T PREACH

At twenty-six Daniel P. Saylor was baptized and at thirty was called to the ministry. Those were days when the Church of the Brethren did not look with favor on those who volunteered for the ministry, but called its ministers by a democratic vote of the entire congregation. When Daniel was called to the ministry he became irritated and insisted that the church had made a mistake, had shown poor judgment. He left the meeting, returned home and explained all to his wife, who, being a Friend, did not encourage him to accept the ministry. But the matter did not end there.

Daniel was earnest, sincere, conscientious. The problem weighed heavily on his heart. He was troubled in his devotional periods. Great distress laid hold of him. Elder Price heard of the situation and, good man that he was, was so touched that he went to see Daniel. He kindly presented the matter as he and the church saw it, but Daniel still insisted that he had none of the qualifications of a preacher, saying that he was "empty," "not qualified" and "had nothing for the people."

Brother Price cited a number of Biblical characters who also felt that they were not qualified for the work to which God had called them. Such was his presentation that Daniel was led to reconsider and a few weeks later was installed in the ministry.

Those who knew Brother Saylor and heard him preach testify to his power in the pulpit.

There is merit in our present volunteer system. History proves that there was also merit in the custom the church had when she laid her hands on men through a democratic vote and installed them in the ministry. Might it be that the Lord approves both methods?

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1887, p. 19.

THE END OF HIS SERMON

In 1864 Elder John Kline was moderator of Annual Meeting for the fourth and last time. The meeting closed on May 18. On the evening of May 19 it was his lot to preach. At Annual Meeting he was deeply impressed "with the importance of Christian brethren making their conversation and lives bear testimony to the sincerity and intelligence of their profession of faith in Christ." For this reason he took for his text: "And they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." The closing words of his sermon as he has recorded them were these:

"Now, Brethren and friends, I have only touched some of the chords of the beautiful anthem of my

theme. I now leave it with you, hoping that you may learn every note of it; and by the sweet music of a good life delight the ears and warm the hearts of all who hear its rich harmonies. Possibly you may never see my face or hear my voice again. I am now on my way back to Virginia, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. It may be that bonds and affliction abide me. But I feel that I have done nothing worthy of bonds or of death; and none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

Grand words these with which to close a great sermon. Doubly so in this case as on June 15 bullets of assassins aroused by war fever pierced his body and he fell from the back of "Faithful Nell" who had carried him thousands of miles as he went about preaching the message of love as revealed by his Savior. No wonder a smile rested on his face as he lay cold in death.

Source: Life of John Kline, p. 477.

THAT UNFORGETTABLE PREACHER

How easy to forget some faces! How utterly impossible to forget others! Lina M. Stoner had this experience with a Brethren minister whom many knew only to love and remember. Her own words best portray her personal experience:

"No songs to me were sweeter, no sermons more

soul-stirring than those that fell from the lips of our beloved brother, Jacob Trostle, who, though dead, yet speaketh. With what immense joy did the members of our happy home welcome this godly man into our midst! With his great heart overflowing with love he sang, he prayed, he talked to us of Jesus, and had an angel visited our home he could not have left us with richer blessings, with more earnest longings for a holy life. I sit again in the house of God, a silent listener, as he ministers in holy things. What was there in his appeal to sinners that sent conviction to my soul? Why did worldly pleasures appear as unsatisfying husks as he portrayed the glories of a holy life? And as he sang and preached of judgment my aching heart yearned for forgiveness and liberty. When at last the burden became too great to bear alone, it was to Bro. Trostle I went for help in finding the 'Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,' and when the morning of joy dawned, when the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing on his wings, I could say:

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise!"

Those of us who knew Brother Trostle and heard him preach realize how inadequate are words to describe the emotions he stirred in the heart when his angelic face and sweet voice spoke of the love of God and the power of Jesus to save the lost, and comfort the troubled soul.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1904, p. 11.

FOLLOWING THE PREACHER

When J. H. Moore lived in Lanark, Illinois, during the late seventies he frequently filled the pulpit at the Church of the Brethren. Since he was a popular preacher many besides the membership attended when they knew he was to preach. It was in the days of the free ministry. Often ministers from other congregations dropped in at the Lanark church. It was a practice those days, when a visiting minister dropped in, to extend to him the courtesy of the pulpit.

One such visitor accepted the invitation and preached though it had been announced during the week that Brother Moore would be the speaker. Now it happened that this particular minister was a very good man, but the Lord had not endowed him to be a great preacher, so many were disappointed—and one sister above all. Nor was she slow in expressing herself later in the day. She had invited the Moores to dine with her after church. While she was preparing the meal she found time to enter the living room and the following conversation took place:

“Brother Moore, after this when it is announced that you are to preach you are to preach and not ask Brother — to take your place. You know he cannot preach. There were many present this morning expressly to hear your sermon and they were sorely disappointed.”

Just then the odor from the kitchen told her her presence was needed elsewhere. Hurriedly she

attended to the food on the stove and returning continued:

"Don't forget what I have just said, Brother Moore. That man cannot preach and you are not to ask him. I got nothing out of his sermon."

"Well, sister, I got fourteen points out of his sermon."

"You did? I'd like to know what they were."

Brother Moore, opening a little notebook, began to read his fourteen points. He had just reached number five when she interrupted him saying:

"Stop! You know he never made one of those points."

"I know he did not, but I thought he should have made them, and while he was talking I jotted them down. Now I have a new sermon for next Sunday."

Do you know how to follow the preacher in his sermon?

Too AGGRESSIVE

When S. S. Mohler began his ministerial work in Southern Ohio he did not meet with the favor of the older ministers because he deviated from the beaten path which they were traveling. He who dares to leave the beaten path may expect opposition and may be kept in a limited sphere. But even such a man may win the favor of others, if he is wise and not too set in his ways. Two objections were raised to his attitude.

He favored Sunday schools. In 1862 the Annual Meeting was held in Montgomery County, Ohio. Of the seventy-two items of business before the meeting items 1 and 31 dealt with Sunday schools. At that time Sunday schools were tolerated but not encouraged. One writer reporting the meeting said: "S. S. Mohler, then a young minister, stood up for Sunday schools, but was opposed by nearly all the old elders." As the old elders saw it Mohler was moving in the wrong direction.

The common run of preachers at that time confined themselves to exhorting and explaining certain passages of the Bible. When Mohler began to preach he had already discovered that a few strong ministers selected a text, studied thoroughly its meaning and application, and from it developed a logical discourse with all parts properly related. This method was not acceptable to his older brethren, who saw to it that for several years his work in the pulpit was largely limited to opening and closing meetings. However, he lived to see the Sunday school recognized and fostered, and the well-arranged sermon not only tolerated by the older ministers but demanded by the congregations.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1913, pp. 23-29.

CONCERNING GEORGE WOLFE

In 1851 Christian Long held a series of meetings in Adams County, Illinois, in the congregation of George Wolfe, who was then seventy-one years of

age, and not at all well. In fact he felt he could not attend the meetings. However, his son David, with whom George was living, urged his father to attend the meetings, saying that they would make full provision for his every comfort. And so he went to the first meeting and to the nine that followed. Remarkable how the mind and spirit rise above the body when once they assert themselves!

When they came to the last meeting Long insisted that Wolfe should deliver the sermon as it would probably be his last opportunity to hear this great leader of the Far Western Brethren. This Wolfe declined to do, saying that if Long requested it he would make a few remarks after the sermon. After Long had spoken and taken his seat, Wolfe, over six feet tall and weighing 275 pounds, every inch a man, arose and in fifteen minutes gave an accurate resumé of Long's ten sermons, omitting none of the main points. He so moved the congregation that there was not a dry eye in the house. He always made lasting impressions and had no trouble to hold an audience however long he spoke.

Hiram [Heil?] Hamilton speaks of Wolfe in terms something like this: "It was at the Annual Meeting of 1852 in Elkhart County, Indiana. I heard that George Wolfe was there and I was eager to see him. Often had I heard of him as the leader of the Far Western Brethren. So unfavorable were some of the remarks that I concluded that he must be some sort of monster. I finally found him seated on a porch conversing

with other brethren. And what did I see? A monster? Not at all—simply a man, large, well proportioned, and a mind keen enough to answer any question put to him. Folks were eager to see him, talk to him, be near him. Some admired him; some opposed him. Peter Nead was among those who were opposed to Wolfe and his teaching on some of our doctrines. To me Wolfe was a born leader."

Source: J. H. Moore in manuscript, Annual Meeting at Covington, Ohio, 1875.

ANOTHER JONAH

One day D. L. Miller and I were driving to the Pine Creek church in Illinois to attend a love feast. This was the old congregation in which the Millers resided when they were first married, though they lived in Polo, about eight miles distant. When we were together on such occasions he frequently told me something about himself and the church of his boyhood days. I always prized such occasions for he was a keen observer and a good narrator.

"John," said he, "did I ever tell you that once I was a Jonah and ran away to avoid what seemed like a coming obligation?"

"No," said I, "nor could I think of you as a man who would shirk any obligation. Tell me the story."

"Well, it was like this. You know at that time the Brethren called men to the ministry by a vote

of the entire church. Somehow I had a feeling that the church would call me to the ministry, if I remained in their midst, and I did not want to be a minister. And that is what took me to Illinois where I was sure I could escape the call. But when I was forty-five years of age the church at Mount Morris laid its hands on me. By that time I knew I should not run from a task to which the Lord called me so I accepted the ministry. But, John, I had lost so many precious years. Forty-five is too late to enter on your lifework. That's how I failed as did Jonah. He tried to escape by boat; I took the train. The Lord arrested us both and turned us to the task he had assigned us. Whatever you do, don't be a Jonah."

OUR FIRST COLORED PREACHER

Listen to his story:

Samuel Weir, colored, born in Virginia, Bath County, a slave, April 15, 1812.

At twelve years of age sold by his master, William Byrd, to Andrew McClure for \$280. Served McClure nineteen years.

Set free by McClure though he could have been sold for \$1,500.

Baptized by Peter Nead on Sunday, May 14, 1843.

Unanimously called to the ministry by the Paint Creek Church of the Brethren, Ohio, in August, 1849.

Won his first colored converts August 1865, after

sixteen years of hard labor and much discouragement.

Authorized to baptize and to solemnize marriages in 1872.

On Feb. 9, 1881, ordained to the eldership by Elders Thomas Major and Landon West.

Closed his eyes in death March 15, 1884.

Such are the short and simple annals of the first Brethren colored preacher. But read on.

The McClures were very good to Samuel in his days of slavery. They had a little boy, twelve years of age, whom they adored. One day the boy fell from a horse and was killed. His parents grieved greatly. They began to think of the future, of their own spiritual condition. They applied for membership in the Church of the Brethren. They learned that the Brethren would not baptize slaveholders, being utterly opposed to that wicked and inhuman business. They determined to set Samuel free though they could have sold him for \$1,500. Then they were baptized. Their Christian conduct impressed Samuel deeply. He, too, thought of the future and salvation. The result was his baptism by Elder Peter Nead. But—

Virginia had a law that any slave set free could be claimed as a slave by another if found within the state one year after he was set free. That raised a new problem. Benjamin F. Moomaw mounted his horse and piloted Samuel, who was outfitted with a new suit of clothes and a good horse by the McClures, to Ohio and permanent freedom. There Samuel found the Brethren to

whom Moomaw recommended him. There his church work began.

Gone are the McClures, gone is Samuel, gone is Moomaw, gone is the colored church Samuel built up, but somewhere over yonder is the record of all this—and also the record of how little the Church of the Brethren has done for the colored folks in America.

Source: Life of Elder Samuel Weir, by Landon West.

SNAPSHOTS OF JOHN H. UMSTAD

After Sam Jones began to be popular a whole brood of little Sammy Joneses appeared in the pulpit, each trying to imitate or improve on Sam but none measuring up to the original. Aping another is a poor way of trying to get to the front. Standing in the Green Tree cemetery of the Church of the Brethren I was reminded of this as I read on one stone:

REV. JOHN H. UMSTAD

BORN

January 1, 1802.

DIED

April 26, 1873.

AGED 71 YEARS, 3 MONTHS AND 25 DAYS.

“Rest from thy labors.”

Yes, “rest from thy labors,” John Horning Umstad. Your labors were many and good. You deserve a rest.

John Umstad was converted, baptized and called to the ministry at the same time and the same place that his brother-in-law, Isaac Price, had these experiences. Together they labored long and well. There was something in the character of Umstad that won men, held them and caused them to remember him. Another minister speaking of him said that if he tried to preach like Brother Umstad he just could not do it. There was a reason for his remark. *John Umstad was always himself.* And he who is always himself is unlike others—he is inimitable.

Job of old cursed the day in which he was born. John Umstad ever held sacred January 1, the day of his birth. To him that day was different from all others. To him that was a day of prayer. For him all days were days of prayer but more especially so was his birthday. It became his fixed custom to invite in friends and neighbors for special prayer meetings on New Year's Day because it was the day of his birth. Not many of us do that. To us birthdays are days of gifts and feasts; to John Umstad a birthday was a day of special thanksgiving and renewed consecration. Was not his the better way?

John Umstad was liberal. He was well fixed financially. He never allowed his possessions to separate him from nor lift him above those in need. Once a woman appealed to him for financial help. He responded liberally to her needs. Soon he found her appealing to his wife for help. Without stating what he had done he urged his

wife to give whatever she felt she should give. For a Thanksgiving feast he invited the poor neighbors whom others passed by, not the rich and well supplied. He was a student of his Bible and had imbibed the teachings of his Savior on feasts and gifts. He insisted in his preaching on strict obedience to the Word and he tried to practice what he preached.

His preaching was warm and emotional rather than methodical and theological. He filled himself with the Bible and when he preached drew from this storehouse. Others might draw more from books, but none drew more from observation of and association with men. It was his rule to talk to God before he tried to preach to men. Once he and James Quinter were preaching in a mountainous district of Pennsylvania. It was Umstad's turn to preach. The congregation had assembled, the time of opening was at hand, but the preacher was absent. They waited. Finally Brother Umstad entered, ready for work. He had been out alone in the mountain praying, getting ready to preach.

He loved to preach because he loved men and would help them. He also loved to fish and often engaged in that sport, though he did not think of it as sport. On one occasion he went fishing before meeting. Deeply interested, he did not notice the passing of time. At last he realized the hour and started for the meetinghouse, which he entered late. As the congregation was waiting he entered the pulpit and announced his text: "I go

a fishing." We do not have his sermon, but may well believe that it abounded in practical applications from his morning's experience.

He took a kindly interest in others. George D. Zollers speaks of this as he relates several occasions on which they met. Once when he and others were entertained in the Umstad home there was a season of prayer after warm fellowship. The closing prayer was offered by Brother Umstad. After praying for each guest he closed with these words: "Lord, bless Brother Umstad too." While George was living at Hickory Grove, Illinois, Brother Umstad came into the neighborhood. They met as they were nearing the church. Let Brother Zollers describe their meeting: "He greeted me with his countenance gleaming with the sunshine of heavenly love, and poured out the effusions of his heart in these memorable words: 'Hold fast that which thou hast, let no man take thy crown.'" It was at the time of the love feast and the house was crowded. Brother Umstad was to be the first preacher. The brethren urged that, because of the crowd, he should take his stand near the middle of the house. As he walked down the aisle he rubbed his hands and repeated the text: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." A soul-stirring sermon held the congregation spellbound for Brother Umstad preached with fervency and power. He could because he was always himself.

He was evangelistic in his labors, both in and out of the pulpit. His question to strangers, as many could testify, was, "Do you love Jesus?" One was never in doubt as to what he considered his chief mission. One sinner remarked, "I hate to meet that man, for he always says: 'Well, Bub, do you love Jesus?'" Children loved to meet him because he was interested in and sympathetic with them. Because he was always his simple self no one ever questioned his sincerity.

Always his simple self but so different after his conversion. Earlier in life he was in for a good time and carried fun to extremes. He even made sport of his sister's devotion to her Lord. But when he accepted his Savior he faced about, put off the old man and grew into gracious Christian manhood. He was always frank. Once Isaac Price arose to preach and for some reason could not get started. While he was standing in silence, Brother Umstad said to him: "Brother Isaac, if thee hasn't anything to say, thee had better sit down!" Good advice but few of us would have had the grace to say it. Having said this he arose and himself delivered the sermon.

Great soul was John Horning Umstad—generous, earnest, sympathetic. He did not lament that he did not have more talent but was content to use what he did have. Others may have done more, but he did what he could. Great soul he was because he was always his simple self.

Sources: Brethren Family Almanac, 1875, pp. 3-10; 1899, pp. 13-15; 1909, pp. 17-21. History of the Church

of the Brethren, Eastern Pennsylvania, pp. 273-279.
Some Who Led, pp. 50-53.

GEORGE PHILIP ROTHENBERGER

George Philip Rothenberger was born in Partenheim Hessen, Darmstadt, Germany, in 1802, left home at seventeen because of a cruel stepfather, traveled over parts of Europe, became a citizen of the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland, came to the United States, lived in Ohio and Indiana, and died in Kosciusko County, Indiana, in 1881. Our interest in him arises from his connection with the Church of the Brethren.

George had been reared and confirmed in the Lutheran faith. When he went to Switzerland, because he found no Lutheran Church, he united with the German Reformed Church. Here he fell in with a group that was shepherded by a Rev. Froelich, who in some respects held views different from those of the German Reformed congregation to which this group held. Froelich preached and practiced plainness in dress and his group observed the holy kiss. They also denounced infant baptism, oaths and military service. They re-baptized all who had been baptized in infancy, their form of baptism for believers being a trine sprinkling. Rothenberger became a minister among them and suffered severe persecution as did others. Once he was seized, his beard was plucked from its roots and he was left for dead.

When Henry Kurtz visited his father in Ger-

many in 1839 he crossed into Switzerland and did some preaching; there he met the dissenters just mentioned. He baptized a number, Rothenberger being one of them. Froelich opposed Kurtz sternly and wrote a severe letter in which he denounced Kurtz as an impostor. Thus he won back some of his former followers, but not Rothenberger.

After Kurtz returned to the States he and Rothenberger kept up correspondence which resulted in the latter's coming to America, where he continued his connection with the Brethren. I know not when or where he was called to the ministry, but his son says that his father labored as a Brethren minister for forty years. Along with his ministry he sold books. One of his sons became a Brethren minister.

I should add that Kurtz left his impress upon Froelich, who finally adopted trine immersion as his form of baptism. Like Mack of old he first had himself baptized by trine immersion and then baptized in the same way were all who became a part of his congregation when he broke fully with the Reformed Church.

Kurtz and Rothenberger found in the Brethren faith and practice something that made them ardent defenders of the Brethren doctrines. Like the early disciples they had found something they prized and were eager to share it with others.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1883, p. 21.

A BOY AND HIS TESTAMENT

My story goes back to 1876 when James Taylor (popularly known as Jim) left his native South Carolina and made his way into Tennessee. Now Jim was a teacher and specialized in writing. In Washington County, Tennessee, he had an unusual pupil twenty-one years of age. This pupil was industrious and ambitious and abounded in energy. His close application and rapid progress so won the favor of his teacher that he became his assistant, going ahead and organizing new schools. Thus the two worked their way to Polk County, North Carolina, where the teacher left his helper while he himself went on to friends in an adjoining county.

But first let us fix this young man more definitely in our minds. His name was George. He was born in Washington County, Tennessee, on April 9, 1855. He had never had many school privileges but that did not hinder him from training himself to things good and useful. George was seldom idle. He found a job or made one. In Polk County he stopped at the home of a Mr. Sanders. Being a ready talker he signed the four children of the Sanders home as the nucleus of a school for Jim. He soon had a large school in that neighborhood.

George was a Christian, a member of the Church of the Brethren. He was not ashamed of his church or his Lord. He ever carried with him a New Testament, and as opportunity afforded he read his New Testament to others and explained

its meaning. He was well versed in the teachings and practices of the Church of the Brethren. Now it happened that there were no Brethren people in that community nor had the folks ever heard of that church and its faith. George had a way of telling his story so that folks listened and before they knew it they were interested in what he had to say. After the day's work in the field, in the mine or in the woods was done, George would get out his little Testament and explain the practices of his church, always reading from the Book the passages on which the practice was based. Naturally things began to take definite shape.

"Write for some of your preachers to come into this country. We want to hear more of this new gospel which you bring." That was just what George was waiting for. He began to write back to Tennessee and begged for some preachers to come and tell the people more than he was able to give them. But to no avail. The answer came that the distance was great (130 miles), the mountains were rugged and the moonshiners of Polk County were numerous and hostile. But George persisted; he had that stick-to-itiveness that never lets up until its ends are achieved. As constant dripping wears away the stone so his repeated appeals brought the preachers.

When George wrote that already seven heads of families were ready for baptism the matter was settled. Neither distance, mountains nor moonshiners longer stood in the way. Frederick Washington Dove, a man whom all loved, the father of

the late J. A. Dove, and Andy Vines saddled their horses and set out for Polk County, found George on April 20, 1878, preached thirteen stirring sermons and remained until April 29. During that time they baptized a number of applicants, one of whom was Betty, the wife of George, while others were almost persuaded. They organized a church, named Mill Creek at the suggestion of George; the eight members cast their votes for officers, choosing George as their minister and Henry Cantrell as their deacon. The elders about to leave for home instructed George to minister to the spiritual needs of the group.

George did not prove unfaithful to the trust imposed upon him. Many years later his third wife wrote these words: "The writer heard the young man preach his first sermon, which she thought very good for a man only twenty-two years old." George taught school for many years, farmed and preached; he will always be best known because of his preaching. Today there are five congregations, each going back to that first work of the young man who carried, read and explained the teachings of his New Testament. I have often met him at Annual Conference, have seen him in action as he deliberated as a member of Standing Committee. Though he may not always have agreed with others in all particulars he never failed to co-operate in a truly Christian spirit. He is now in his eighty-seventh year. Some think he is rather conservative. In his home congregation and community he is ahead of the procession.

His name? George A. Branscom, Campobello, South Carolina.

“CAN HE PREACH?”

Saturday afternoon finds two Brethren on horseback set for twenty miles to the west on the prairies of Illinois. The older one has been taking this route once a month regularly. He is a preacher and goes to a certain place on the Sangamon River where he conducts religious services Saturday evening, Sunday morning and Sunday evening. Being human he craves companionship for the journey. Being a preacher he thinks of future needs. Nothing unusual happens until half the distance has been covered, when he turns to his companion, a young man, and says:

“Now, John, I will preach this evening and Sunday morning, but Sunday night I want you to give a talk on Trine Immersion.”

All this was news to the young brother, who asked to be excused as he was not a preacher and many would not think favorably should he occupy the preaching period at a regular appointment. But the older brother insisted that it must be as he suggested and that he himself would assume full responsibility for anything that might happen. And so it was settled. At the appointed time and place the young man arose and for one hour traced trine immersion from apostolic times to his day.

A month later the annual visit was made by the deacons. One item of business for the next coun-

cil was presented, viz., the sermon on the Sangamon by that young layman when an elder was present whose business it was to preach. During the council when the matter was under consideration someone asked the elder, John Barnhart, whether Brother John really did preach. The elder replied that he had asked him to speak and John had done so.

"Can he preach?" was the brother's next question.

"He took up the full hour," replied the elder.

"Well, if he can preach I say let us put him at it," was the brother's ready response. This was practically nominating John for the ministry, a rather unusual procedure for that day.

By common consent the matter was dropped with the agreement that it would be considered at the coming love feast when the membership and some visiting ministers would be present. The morning of the feast arrived and John walked the distance of six miles to enjoy its blessings. During the day the membership was consulted and it was agreed to vote for a minister at once. It was a foregone conclusion that the lot would fall upon John, and it did. The results of the election were announced and John was duly installed in the ministry of the Church of the Brethren. Nor was John surprised. For some time he had felt the call, prepared himself as best he could and left the rest to the Lord and the church.

That night John wrapped himself in a blanket and fell asleep on the hay in the barn where he

had just been set aside for his life work. Three weeks later he walked three miles, built the fire in a schoolhouse stove and awaited the arrival of the worshipers. At the appointed time John Barnhart conducted the devotional service, then turned to the young minister and asked him to preach the morning sermon, which he did. This time there was no objection because he was a duly "elected" minister.

Such is the simple story of the call of J. H. Moore, long-time church leader, to the ministry.

Source: The Boy and the Man, pp. 102-105.

"I'LL NEVER PREACH AGAIN"

When my father first began to preach he was timid and fearful and made a poor out of it. That was before I knew him as a preacher. Later in life all fear left him when he was preaching the gospel. One day he told me how and when the change came to pass.

Brethren ministers were in the habit of visiting neighboring congregations and giving them a few meetings. One day Martin Myers, our elder, said: "Dan, you and I are going to Yellow Creek to give them a few meetings." Father demurred but Martin insisted and had a way of winning others to his side. Word was sent ahead and the meetings were properly announced. Such volunteer service was in good taste then though one might be censured for such procedure now.

When two ministers went together thus they

took turns in preaching. Father preached on Saturday night overcome by the same fear that always haunted him. That night he told Martin something like this:

“Tomorrow morning I am going home and I will never preach again. I am not cut out for a preacher.” And when father made up his mind to do something he usually did it. But not so this time.

“No, you are not going home. Tomorrow morning you will preach at — and I will preach at —.” (There were two appointments for that Sunday morning.)

Father insisted that he was going home. His mind was made up.

“You are not going home. We are here in my sled and with my team and they are going to stay right here. Besides, the snow is deep, the weather cold and the distance is twenty miles. It’s too far to walk,” Martin insisted.

“But I can walk,” said father.

Martin won. Father went to his appointment and preached. As he related the incident he said something like this:

“John, that morning all fear left me and never returned. There came to me a power and a freedom I had never before experienced. I recognized the change and the audience recognized it. They followed me through the entire sermon. If there is anything like inspiration today, I had it that morning, for I became a different man as I stood before those people.”

"I LIKE THAT OLD MAN"

Jacob D. Haughtelin was born near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and died near Panora, Iowa, in his eighty-third year, having served in the ministry for more than fifty years. With little schooling he began teaching school at eighteen. In his home the parents taught their children in their early years, thus giving them a start that enabled them to continue their studies even without a teacher. The following from the Yearbook of the Church of the Brethren is a fine characterization of the man and his manner of preaching:

"For some years after he was elected to the ministry he heard very little preaching other than his own—his work being mainly on the frontier. His style was more forceful than elegant, but his candor and earnestness carried conviction. He enjoyed telling of a well-educated young woman, a music teacher, who had heard much of him and was anxious to meet him. After hearing him speak at a ministerial meeting, she expressed herself this way: 'My, but he is awkward, but I would as soon hear him as any one there—I like that old man.'

Source: Yearbook, 1919, pp. 51, 52.

QUINTER UNMOVED

James Quinter was once approached by a minister of a large denomination who suggested that Quinter leave the Brethren and unite with this large denomination. A conversation something

like the following took place between them:

"Brother Quinter, you are a minister in the Church of the Brethren."

"I am."

"The Brethren do not pay their ministers, do they?"

"No, they do not pay a stated salary."

"The Brethren are a rather backward people, are they not?"

"They are so considered by some."

"You are an educated minister; you are an able minister; the Brethren do not seem to appreciate you fully; ours is a large denomination which pays its ministers well and appreciates its ministry. Why don't you cast your lot with our people where you will be well paid and fully appreciated? Our people are leaders in many lines."

"If what you have just said about your ministers and people is correct, if they have many able ministers, if they are great leaders, and if the Brethren are a backward people and do not have many able men, don't you think the Lord would be pleased to have me continue my labors with the Brethren?"

And there the conversation ended. Quinter did not change church relations for a field financially more promising. He had dedicated his life to the preaching of the gospel as he understood it and found his big opportunity in the Church of the Brethren.

"SPEAK ON LOVE"

In the pioneer days in North Dakota we had many members in Towner County and meeting-houses now abandoned were well filled. Once at a love feast Levi Mohler was the chief speaker at the morning service. When the congregation again assembled for worship after the noon meal the preachers sat back of the long table. When the time came for the sermon it was suggested that Mohler should deliver the first sermon. He had not expected to do this, thinking that his sermon in the morning should excuse him. But the ministers insisted so he arose but nothing came to him. His mind seemed to be perfectly blank.

The silence was embarrassing, painful, both to himself and the congregation. Finally his good wife arose and said, "Brother Levi, speak on Love." The congregation had just sung Loving Kindness. That gave him a start and for fifteen minutes he spoke with unusual freedom. Other ministers followed with short sermons, as was the custom at the two-day feast. And, would you believe it, every one spoke on Love.

AN EARLY FORUM

Some have thought that the church forum for free discussion is quite modern. On the contrary, I find it was used at an early date in Virginia by Elders Jacob Miller and William Smith in the Roanoke region. Miller spoke mostly in German, Smith in English. Miles upon miles they traveled

together, now on foot, now on horse, determined to preach the good news to all. Nor did they confine themselves to mere preaching in which they did all the work. Far otherwise.

It was the custom of these two ministers to meet with the people an hour before the preaching service. This hour was spent in Bible study in which the Bible was read and special points in the reading were discussed. The reading and discussion were open to all that felt to participate. These open discussions helped to build up a fellowship between preachers and laymen that should not be overlooked by ministers who would develop their charges. Doubtless such discussions led to the discovery of ministerial talent.

These forums were in a measure similar to the group J. H. Moore used to lead in the early days of his ministry in southern Illinois. Frequently in his preaching circuits he would arrive at some Brethren farm home on Saturday evening. His coming had been announced ahead so that the neighbors were properly informed. Often a number would gather in this country home and spend Saturday evening in Bible study. A large part of this study consisted of Bible stories of leading characters and outstanding events. Brother Moore was the narrator and he always had a band of attentive listeners for he knew how to tell a story to perfection. I have often wondered whether his interest in delineating character and his skill in telling the story of some of our own church leaders did not have their origin in the method he

developed in these Saturday evening gatherings.

Pastors may learn from these examples how they might spend some hours of special interest in their own parishes, hours that would offset some of the adverse influence growing out of unhelpful movies and parties that do not uplift.

SERMONS VERSUS LECTURES

When J. H. Moore came to the District of Northern Illinois he introduced a new style of preaching. His sermons were different in subject, in content, in delivery and in length. And yet he preached the same doctrines we had always heard. We youngsters liked his sermons, partly, because they were shorter, but more, because he made them interesting to us. As our congregation was only nine miles from Lanark he often preached for us.

Once our elder, Martin Myers, said to my father: "Well, Dan, how do you like Brother Moore's sermons?"

"I like them very much," father replied, "and my boys always are glad when he preaches. They are eager to go to church when they know he will speak. And how do you like them, Martin?"

"Well, I like what Brother Moore says, but he does not preach; he lectures."

And so they parted, father pleased with the sermons, Martin pleased with the lectures.

Within a year at Lanark the question arose as to whether members should attend lectures, especially paid lectures. The matter was considered at

council meeting. This raised the question as to how sermons and lectures differed.

M. M. Eshelman, turning to the clerk, said: "Brother Harrison, you have been a schoolteacher; tell us the difference between a sermon and a lecture."

The reply was: "I do not have a dictionary at hand, but I would say that when a man lectures, he says something; when he preaches, he may say something or he may not."

WILLIAM SMITH, THE ENGLISH PREACHER

In 1765 Jacob Miller left Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and settled in Franklin County, Virginia, where he was known as the pioneer German preacher. A tablet at the Brick church is dedicated to the memory and work of Jacob Miller and William Smith, who, with staff in hand, together walked all over that country proclaiming salvation through Jesus Christ. We are concerned now about this Brethren preacher, Smith.

While Smith was living in England the king appointed a certain man to office. As you know, in the British Empire the king and the church are closely knit. Perhaps you will recall the prominent part the church played when the present king was crowned after the abdication of his brother. Well, before the above-mentioned appointee could take office it was required that he should be baptized. Now this man had strict notions about baptism and insisted that he be baptized after the

apostolic baptism, which request was granted him.

To arrange for the baptism a large font was dragged by six oxen to a place where it could be filled with water. In this font the applicant was "baptized after the apostolic baptism" by being immersed three times, the oldest form of Christian baptism of which we have any record. William Smith saw this scene and never forgot it. Later he came to Virginia and settled in what is now Floyd County, which joins Franklin County. Smith met the Brethren, accepted their faith and was baptized by Jacob Miller. Later he was called to the ministry. These two preachers became lifelong friends. Miller did most of his preaching in German while Smith delivered his sermons in English. Thus the one supplemented the message of the other.

HOW LONG SHOULD A SERMON BE?

Much has been said and written about the length of the sermon. There is much difference both in opinion and practice. In colonial days sermons were long—very long. When I was a boy I heard folks talk about the long sermons J. W. Stein preached; the longest reported, as I recall, was four hours. But folks listened to him to the end. A sermon of that length would hardly be tolerated now.

J. G. Royer was a great teacher-preacher. With him preaching was teaching, interpreting the Word of God and applying it to present needs and

problems. Asked how long a sermon should be he made this very simple statement:

"If the sermon is good, it need not be long; if it is poor, it should not be long."

I have often said that I have never heard a sermon the gist of which could not have been stated in three minutes. I have never preached a sermon of which I could not state the gist in less than a minute.

A certain dean in a seminary was wont to tell his students that they should never deliver a sermon until they were able to state its message in one sentence. What Christ said about hypocrites who make long prayers may well be repeated to ministers who deliver long sermons (Matt. 6:7).

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BOOKS AND PRINTING

PROBLEMS OF ONE EDITOR

The destruction of the Sower press during the Revolutionary War was a serious loss to the Church of the Brethren and to the colonies. Henry Kurtz bestowed an inestimable blessing by establishing a new press in 1851. Browsing through the early pages of the Gospel Visitor I was impressed with the problems the editor faced in his new venture.

He was opposed, allowed to begin as a private enterprise, tolerated. Yes, some favored, encouraged, helped, but, as usual, the opposition was more vociferous and persistent than those favoring. He, however, was patient and knew how to win friends so succeeded. Consider a few objections.

There was objection to the price of the publication. One good brother from Philadelphia thought that since Brethren ministers preached without financial remuneration an editor should not charge for his publication. He apparently forgot that good Peter Keyser, who preached for years without remuneration and opposed a supported ministry, did charge for the material he furnished in his business transactions.

The editor was accused of being partial, of not treating all alike. Some thought he should make no comments on what others wrote, neither should he make any reply to articles by writers with

whose sentiments he did not agree. Though kind in his writings, Kurtz was not spineless. His paper stood for something and had a message for its readers.

Our people had not been given to much writing. For that reason he lacked trained contributors. At times he had a dearth of material, lacked church news and correspondence. Again, he was flooded with more than he could use.

Often an article lacked the personal touch because the writer's name was withheld or some assumed name was attached, such as Cephas, Theoklitus, Peter, etc. Abraham H. Cassell wrote under the name of Theophilus.

Though the editor repeatedly asked correspondents to designate original articles "For the Visitor" and to give proper credit to all copied material, writers did not always follow his suggestion. One man complained that a certain article was published under the name of a living member though it was taken from an old writer. The editor apologized for not making this discovery himself.

Kurtz was a German and thought and wrote in German style. The long and involved sentence was natural for him. Here I found one sentence of two hundred sixteen words. Should you find such a sentence in the Gospel Messenger you would probably not read through to the end.

Some writers had poor terminal facilities. One contributor meandered through much dry material at some length, finally closing with an apology for his long article. The editor agreed that an

apology was due the reader. Another wrote a half column, then said he had not intended to write so much, but continued for another page. Another began to write. Because it was raining and he could not work he kept on writing though he did not have much to say.

Folks sought advice from the editor on various subjects. A letter from Germany stated that because of extreme poverty a group was arranging to come to America and settle in Wisconsin, assigning lots of forty and eighty acres to individual families. The project never materialized, but the editor sketched a diagram of how four sections might thus be settled. He even suggested how such a scheme might be utilized in doing mission work and building up new congregations—a practical suggestion for building a rural community and establishing a new congregation.

Here comes a man with a family of fourteen, six of the children being under ten. He is poor and wishes to go west but lacks the railroad fare. He understands that the editor holds stock in a railroad. Would he not write to Pittsburgh and secure half-fare rates from his road? The writer assures him he would repay the same with interest later. The editor replied that he held no railroad stock, but felt sure the man could secure reduced rates for his family, if he were willing to take the cheaper coaches.

I enjoyed glancing through these old Visitors, and was glad for what the men of that day did. And I rejoiced at the progress made since then and

thanked God for our excellent Gospel Messenger and other publications, and for the able men and women who edit the same and for those who contribute to their columns. Yes, Henry Kurtz and his writers had their problems. They met them nobly and we are heirs to their labors.

GOOD-BY, GOSPEL VISITOR

Henry J. Kurtz, son of Henry Kurtz, learned the printer's trade in the print shop of his father, and for nine years was editor and publisher of the Gospel Visitor in conjunction with James Quinter. During 1873 James Quinter arranged to take over the Christian Family Companion from H. R. Hollsinger and Henry J. Kurtz's interests in the Gospel Visitor and merge the two papers into one weekly. Having known the Gospel Visitor from its inception and being part owner and editor, Kurtz found it hard to part from the Visitor. His own words are:

"Knowing its history from the start—its early trials and difficulties—the thought that it will be no more is not a pleasant one. It is as if a friend of our early youth were leaving us. Many a reminiscence of its earlier years is treasured up in our memory, and many a good lesson has it given us. But violence is laid upon it and we meekly submit.

"Our connection with it as publisher dates back some nine years. These have been eventful years to us. We have labored under difficulties. We have met with disappointments and losses, and

have had our afflictions and bereavement. Temptations have beset us at every step. Envyings, jealousies, backbitings—all have cast their venomous darts at us. But the many hearty well wishes of our friends have often cheered our drooping spirits, and the consciousness within of the rectitude of our intentions has again nerved us to duty."

Thus the younger Kurtz took leave of the Gospel Visitor. He, however, continued in the publishing business at Poland and Dayton, Ohio, where he edited and published the Children's Paper and thus kept in touch with his old friends.

Source: Gospel Visitor, December 1873, p. 380.

THE EDITOR'S WASTEBASKET

I have often heard of the editor's wastebasket but have never seen one, that is, in the sense that the public accepts the term. There is a general feeling that editors destroy rejected manuscript by throwing it into a wastebasket and that the janitor disposes of it as rubbish. Not so. Editors, as a rule, return rejected manuscript, if it is sent in with return postage, or hold it until called for by the writer.

J. H. Moore once returned one of my manuscripts, stating that it did not measure up to standard. I read it again and agreed with him fully. Perhaps you have had manuscript returned and could not understand why. Just remember the editor knows his constituency and studies the needs of his patrons daily. He has an ideal for his

publication and to reach that ideal must view the problem from every angle. If you understood his point of view you would doubtless agree with his decision, even about your rejected manuscript.

When J. H. was editing the Brethren at Work, a grocer from Polo, Illinois, sent a well-written article advocating Sunday schools. The editor appreciated the article, agreed with it, but returned it to the author, D. L. Miller, suggesting that the Sunday school was being recognized and adopted by many congregations and that in his opinion nothing was to be gained at the time by discussing the problem. D. L. accepted the decision but in after years often twitted J. H. about that returned article.

Later while J. H. was residing in the South and D. L. sat in the editorial chair he returned one of J. H.'s articles, reminding him that now they were even, each having returned one article.

Yes, editors do reject much but they do not throw it into the wastebasket. If they printed all that comes to them, they could not hold their jobs long.

MIGHTIER THAN SWORD OR PEN

When I went to country school teachers still stressed readin', 'ritin' 'nd 'rithmetic. Every pupil had his copybook. At the top of each page the teacher in his own handwriting wrote the copy. Some of those copies I can never forget. Those

days a popular copy was "Hope on, hope ever." Pupils followed the copy fairly well on the first lines, but ere long they forgot the teacher's copy and followed their own scrawls. And what a mess they at times made of it. Before they discovered what they were doing their "Hope on, hope ever" had become "Hop on, hop over."

Another copy was "The Pen is mightier than the Sword." That made a good copy for practice but I was rather skeptical of the truthfulness of the statement. (That was before I even knew what an editor was.) With this copy there was not the same chance for a blunder as in the one above, but the scrawls were just as wide of the mark of accuracy.

For some time Howard Miller was editor of the Inglenook. And a mighty good editor he was. Howard knew how to think. He also knew how to put his thoughts into king's English. Few Brethren of his day were his equal in wielding the editorial pen. I shall never forget the classic he wrote when his wife passed away. It deserves repeated republishing. One day as he sat in his editorial chair preparing material for the next issue of the Inglenook he discovered something that just met his needs. Laying hands on that ever-at-hand instrument of all wise editors he remarked, "They say, 'The pen is mightier than the sword,' but I say my old shears beat them both." With that he clipped the article and made it a leader for the Inglenook readers, whose interests were ever in his mind.

EDITORIALS ON SHINGLES

Yes, editorials on shingles! That's something new though editorials are written on almost everything under the sun. From experience and observation I have been led to think that among the many reasons for editorials is also this one—something to fill space on a certain page of a publication which is known as the editor's page.

The editorials on shingles to which I refer are some that were written in the early years of the Brethren at Work. I ran across the information recently. M. M. Eshelman, one of the "first" editors, in a reminiscent mood was writing to J. H. Moore, another "first" editor of the Brethren at Work. Among other things mentioned was this: "The days when we used to write editorials on wooden shingles when we chanced to think of a subject and the shingle was at hand."

Those were days before typewriters and stenographers sat ready to record whatever the editor thought and said. Those were also the days when editors took their turn with others at the hand press, adding 500 impressions before taking a rest.

What would an editor say today were he forced to write his thoughts on wood and turn the press by hand?

A BORN WRITER

In his autobiography C. H. Balsbaugh tells how he became a writer. He wrote much for publication and his personal correspondence covered a

wide range, going far beyond the ocean. He could not tell the story without bringing in his mother, who was an integral part of it. The story is best told in his own words.

Speaking of his mother he says: "She literally 'prayed without ceasing,' and 'tears were her meat day and night.' I never heard her pray but she wept, which was one of the earliest means God used to impress my child soul with the reality and solemnity of the unseen world.

"My mother could not write, although an excellent reader. Her intense love for my father's sister, who lived in Maryland, awakened and sustained in her an ardent longing to be able to use the pen. This desire saturated my embryonic life, and became the ruling passion of my childhood, and indeed of my life. I have been born with a pen in my hand, and scribbling has become my pleasure and mission."

Nor did he write without much reading and study. Hear him again: "I was an insatiable student. The more profound and intricate a study, the greater was its fascination. Sometimes when anything unusually entralling engaged my mind I would steal downstairs at night when all the rest were wrapped in slumber, and rake the coals out of the ashes one by one, and study by their dim light until my eyes felt like cracking."

For twenty years he was speechless and was forced to communicate with others in the home through slate and pencil. From 1871 to 1874 he was confined to his bed. Of these three years he

writes: "Writing much in bed, both in correspondence and for the press. Many of my articles were written while lying on my back with a board or some other support across my knees. With Webster and Bushnell and Winslow and Macduff and the Bible piled and scattered around me, I spent my isolation. A dear sister, now with Jesus, was with us much of the time, reading and searching the Scriptures. My mother also came often to put her hands on my head and bless her poor boy. Through all these years of pain and loneliness God was training me in deeper self-knowledge and for higher usefulness."

Not strange that he could write as he did.

Source: Glimpses of Jesus, pp. xxiv, xxv.

KEEPING THE EDITOR BUSY

A good brother once spent several days at Elgin during which time he repeatedly dropped in at the Brethren Publishing House and observed its activities. His rounds frequently took him past the door of the Gospel Messenger editor, who sat in his sanctum too busy to notice the many who passed by unless they stepped into his room, on which occasion he was always at their service.

Now the printing business was all Greek to this visiting brother. Though he read the Messenger regularly he little understood the processes through which the paper passed each week before it came to his home with its late news and wise counsel. Few of us realize how others toil that

we may have the common conveniences, the necessities and the luxuries of life.

Asked about what he saw while at the Brethren Publishing House he told of many things. But one thing he could not understand. He said: "I don't see why they do not give Brother Moore something to do. I passed his door repeatedly but all he did was either write or read. All the others were working."

GROWING IN GRACE

Among the closing words of Second Peter are these: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." These words were needed when Peter wrote; they are needed today. Too many Christians who should be strong men and women in Christ remain babes throughout life. C. H. Balsbaugh, that great spiritual writer, says this of himself:

"When I entered the church I was a rigid legalist, not knowing anything of the great central doctrine of justification by faith. Baptism was to me the salient fact that distinguished between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. But eighteen years in the schooling of the Seminary of Calvary brought a wonderful revolution of my views in relation to God and myself. It was a fearful ordeal to tear away from the religious convictions which from my earliest teaching had been my very life, as regards the relation of obedience to salvation. With renewed earnestness and

prayer I searched the Scriptures to find the mind of God as expressed in Christ Jesus. And I found it. . . . Now I see as clearly as my shallow mind will allow me how we are 'saved by grace through faith,' and yet must 'work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.' "

He who discovers the proper relation between a symbol and its meaning makes a wonderful discovery and is finding one avenue of growth in the divine life. Each has its place and neither is a substitute for the other.

Source: Glimpses of Jesus, p. xxv.

THEOPHILUS

It was once the custom to write under an assumed name or under no name at all. In this way the author presumably showed his modesty. It is not for us today to say how much of this modesty was genuine and how much was assumed. Readers of the *Gospel Visitor* well know this practice. I recently was interested in examining some of the early *Gospel Visitor* issues. In volume one, page 156, occurs the following:

"As I am a very extensive reader, and in possession of a library of at least 3,000 volumes chiefly of rare authors, to which but few of your readers have access, and yet I find so many valuable gems in them, and I thought a few gleanings from them could not be unacceptable to your readers. And as I am also greatly interested in the welfare of the 'Visitor,' I thought a few selections from me

might perhaps add a little to the interest of his columns, and thereby extend his usefulness as well as his circulation. But I submit all entirely to your judgment, to dispose of as you may think proper, that is to print it all or in part as you may want to fill up its columns. For I shall always send as much as I can for the price of postage. And should my humble attempts be approved of, I may perhaps continue on from time to time with religious anecdotes, interesting sketches of Biography, etc., as well as short expositions of select passages of sacred scriptures, both ORIGINAL and SELECT. And as I am not so arrogant as to presume that my name would add any to the value or interest of my contributions, I shall therefore withhold it and write under the assumed signature of Theophilus, as some of our dear old brethren did to their contributions in the *Geistliche Magazin* as published by our elder brother Christopher Sower and Alexander Mack."

The first installment appears in the same issue on pages 162, 163. These show wide reading and their contents would be as timely today as they were in 1851. The titles of these selections are: Riches Without Content, Christ's Agony Our Victory, Patience Under Injuries, Blessedness of a Lowly Mind, God's People Known to Him, Bold Bashfulness, A Light Burden, A Good Conscience, Bodily Infirmities, Prayer, A Pious Wish, Use of Afflictions, The Bible, and Following Christ.

Who was Theophilus? Abraham H. Cassel, the great antiquarian and church historian.

PRINT AS IS

Writers sometimes have difficulty in recognizing their own work after an editor goes through it and fashions it after his own notion. Good writers usually discover the improvement; inexperienced writers are more inclined to be critical. When M. M. Eshelman edited the Brethren at Work he received a communication accompanied by the request that the article be printed as it was written and not as the editor thinks it should have been written. The editor graciously did as the writer asked—published it with its many mistakes in the use of capitals, or their absence, faults in punctuation and poor English. The whole appeared rather as a humorous column in a religious paper.

To cap it all the writer's name was added at the close and the editor said he hoped that for once the correspondent was pleased with what the editor had done, for he had printed everything just as it had been written. Unfortunately I was not able to find the writer's reaction. Perhaps it was never printed—perhaps never written.

THE BRETHREN ANTIQUARIAN

Too few know the life of Abraham H. Cassel, great-grandson of Mack and Becker, of the Indian Creek congregation of Harleysville, Pennsylvania, whose reputation as an antiquarian reached the educational centers of Europe. His father was opposed to education, believing that it would ruin his children. But that did not keep Abraham from

learning to read and write and to become an outstanding personality so that even John G. Whittier came to Cassel for material for his *Pennsylvania Pilgrim*.

Cassel's home was crowded with rare and old volumes, printed and written manuscripts, colonial records, early American books and newspapers, Bibles of all descriptions, curious books—nothing escaped his eagle eye. The educational, political and religious worlds have all been enriched because Abraham H. Cassel as a boy, with only six weeks of formal training in school, applied himself to books under conditions that cowed thousands of others and kept them in a world of ignorance.

The Church of the Brethren little realizes what she has gained through Cassel's work. It was Cassel that resurrected our early church history and made it available for others who have popularized it through our own publications. Most of our colleges have collections from his library. Through M. G. Brumbaugh Juniata College has become the repository of much of the cream of the Cassel collection. Here is a great field for future historians to bring to light much that we of the present have never dreamed of. Some college or seminary student could make a large contribution by writing his thesis on the Life and Labors of Abraham H. Cassel. Who will do it?

A UNIQUE TEACHER

Howard Miller was a unique teacher and a close student of nature. I once sat in two of his classes

while he substituted for two weeks while President J. G. Royer was absent on other duties. Howard had his own way of doing and saying things. He was different and that helped to make him interesting. You couldn't sleep in his class. Coming to class he might say, "Have you fellows studied this lesson?" (Now who would be so bold as to say he had not?) "Is there anything in it you do not understand?" (There wasn't.) "Well, since you understand the lesson I will tell you something." And what he told during the lesson period was well told and full of interest. Students left the room feeling that they had learned something worth while. He did not wish to spend the hour on what the students already knew.

Once he told us, "Education is learning to go where to find out things. Learn this truth and you are well on the way of getting an education, which is a daily process, for there is always something new to discover." He illustrated this by an incident in his own experience. I told you he was a student of nature. One day a neighbor boy came and asked a question about a pumpkin. Howard did not know the answer at once so he invited the boy into the house while he himself took down a book, found what he wanted to know and then explained it to the boy in simple language.

The lad thanked him and ran home to his mother exclaiming: "I thought Uncle Howard knew everything, but, mother, he doesn't. I asked him a question and he didn't know the answer. He had to look in a book first."

And then Howard added: "Never be afraid to say, 'I do not know.' Even the wisest know very little. Learn where to go for information when you do not know. The class is dismissed."

That is one class period I never forgot.

THE SISTERS TOO

SARAH RIGHTER MAJOR—FIRST WOMAN PREACHER

Sarah Righter was the daughter of John Righter, a minister in the Church of the Brethren. At eighteen she was convicted under the preaching of Harriet Livermore and at once united with the Brethren at Philadelphia. Along with her conversion came the conviction that she was also called to preach, but she well knew the prejudice against women preachers. Her father and Peter Keyser were sympathetic and gave her great consolation. She was invited to preach at Amwell, New Jersey. Such was her success that others opened their doors to her message.

In 1835 Annual Meeting was asked about a sister's preaching. The decision was against it. A committee was appointed to confer with Sarah. The committee called on her but did not act. One of the committee, James Tracey of Indiana, when asked about the matter said: "I could not give my voice to silence one who can outreach me." And so Sister Righter continued to preach.

She was modest and discreet. It was her custom to take a seat with the audience in front of the pulpit. After her marriage to Thomas Major, a minister, in 1842, he might talk for a short time and then ask her into the pulpit to deliver her message, or he might ask her to do that without doing any of the preaching himself. In this way she won

the favor and approval even of those who were not favorable to a woman's preaching. J. H. Warstler, who heard her preach only once, records his impressions thus:

"She arose and slowly announced her text, an old, plain, simple one. I was disappointed. I expected something new, at least something out of the ordinary course of texts, and here was one of the common ones. I was disappointed in a text, but I was interested in the preacher, and I gave attention. It did not take long to discover that out of the common came forth the sublime. I could see a wonderful unfolding of the text. I think I am safe in saying that I never heard a text so expounded, illustrated and so transformed into newness of life as was done in this discourse. The sermon was a masterpiece of workmanship. I came to the conclusion that the Scriptures of Divine Truth are a gold mine, and it is our work to bring it forth. Then I learned also that the old story may be always new."

Sources: Brethren Family Almanac, 1901, p. 5; 1909, pp. 13-15. Some Who Led, pp. 70-72.

STORY OF THE GISH FUND

Simple, yet full of interest, is the story of how ministers of the Church of the Brethren may secure books at a very low cost.

James R. and Barbara Gish did much mission work on the frontier at their own expense. After the Civil War they visited nearly all the churches

in Tennessee, riding their horses from congregation to congregation. Later they found Arkansas a fruitful field and established churches as a result of their labors. James did the preaching; Aunt Barbara led the singing; both joined in the visiting and personal work.

They were both good business managers. They were interested in the lumber business and in farming. As they lived the simple life their expenses never were high. Naturally funds accumulated. These they spent and invested wisely.

As they lived in the days of the free ministry they were eager to locate ministers in needy places. Their plan was to buy a farm, place on it a minister who knew how to manage it and would at the same time serve the congregation in things spiritual. They would then sell the farm to the minister on terms that he could meet. This done they were ready to locate the next minister. Thus the years came and went. James took sick. Both knew what was coming and made provision.

On Feb. 17, 1896, James made a will. As they had no children and as both had always labored together, he left the entire estate, valued between \$50,000 and \$60,000, to his beloved wife without any instructions as to what she should do with the property. On April 30 he died at Stuttgart, Arkansas. The body was brought to the old home and was buried in the cemetery near Roanoke, Illinois.

During their married life Aunt Barbara had depended on her husband to handle most of the business affairs. His death and will threw upon her a

weighty responsibility. She soon found herself face to face with serious problems. She turned to Philip A. Moore, a man in whom she had complete confidence, for assistance. He was sympathetic, but pleaded his age as a reason for not accepting any new responsibility. He did, however, turn to his nephew, J. H. Moore, editor of the Gospel Messenger and a close friend of the Gishes. The two together suggested that Aunt Barbara seek the help of Thomas Keiser, a farmer-preacher, whose advice she could safely follow. Thus Keiser became her adviser in her business affairs.

In the winter of 1896-1897 Keiser came to Mount Morris, at which time he and J. H. Moore canvassed the situation. Brother Moore suggested how the Gish estate might be handled in a way that would assure Aunt Barbara all the funds she would need during her life and after her death become a memorial that would help provide relief for retired and disabled ministers and missionaries, and books for ministers of the Church of the Brethren at a nominal cost. This plan was explained to Aunt Barbara. She was favorably impressed but asked for time till Annual Meeting to think it over more fully.

At the Annual Meeting at Frederick, Maryland, she met with the General Mission Board and together they studied every phase of the proposition. She liked the plan but asked for more time. She was not a woman to rush into anything without thinking it through from every angle. Once she had settled a matter it remained settled.

By chance (or was it providential?) C. B. Smith of Red Cloud, Nebraska, sent church news that appeared in the Gospel Messenger, Dec. 18, 1897, page 811, in which were these words: "Our hearts were made glad by having 'Aunt Barbara' Gish visit us. She made many friends during her short stay with us. Few people are doing more for the cause than Aunt Barbara. She went from here to Burr Oak, Kansas, where she expects to spend the winter."

The keen eye of Editor Moore caught this bit of good news when it reached his desk. He at once wrote to Daniel Vaniman of McPherson, Kansas, who was then in the employ of the General Mission Board, urging him to see Aunt Barbara immediately as this might be the opportune time to complete the arrangement under consideration.

Brother Vaniman met Aunt Barbara and found her ready to sign the proper papers. A telegram asked Thomas Keiser to come to Burr Oak at once and to bring Aunt Barbara's papers with him. Brother Keiser arrived, the papers were considered and on Dec. 13, 1897, Aunt Barbara placed her name to the document which gave her an annuity of \$1,000 during life in return for which, after certain bequests, she turned all her property over to the General Mission Board, the income thereof to be used for the purpose above stated. I met Aunt Barbara a number of times after this. She was always happy over the arrangement. She lived economically and made good use of any surplus in her hands.

Such is the simple story of how the ministers of the Church of the Brethren are able to secure books at a very low price, and missionaries and ministers who have retired are blessed through the labors of James R. and Barbara Gish. We should not forget the part that Philip A. Moore, J. H. Moore, Daniel Vaniman, Thomas Keiser and C. B. Smith played in this move.

Today there are other husbands and wives who might be led to an equally wise use of their funds, if you who can will help them see what is within their power.

Sources: Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren, pp. 371-383. Some Who Led, pp. 147-150. Last Will and Testament of Barbara Gish. Brethren Family Almanac, 1898, p. 27; 1907, pp. 7-11.

"I NEVER CHARGE A MINISTER"

When J. H. Moore lived at Keuka, Florida, he made a business trip to Micanopy, a prosperous Indian village named after the powerful Indian chief, Micanopy. Of course it was at the time of his visit a white man's village. He spent the night at a boarding house kept by a widow. In the morning he paid his bill and left. Six months later he again went to the same town, arriving at midnight, and was shown to the same room in the same house in which he had slept on his former visit.

After enjoying a good sleep in a good bed, and a good breakfast by the good lady of the house, he asked for his bill, to which she replied, "Fifty cents." Brother Moore tendered her a new silver

coin for that amount. As she extended her hand to take it she stepped back, dropped her hand and looking him straight in the eye said:

"I am informed, sir, that you are a minister."

Brother Moore told her that such was the case.

"I never charge a minister for staying in my house," were her next words, and the tone of her voice indicated that she meant just what she said.

Brother Moore explained that while he was a minister, he was at the time on a business trip and did not wish his profession to exempt him from paying the regular rates other business men would be charged. But that widow had a principle which she was not willing to violate even if it did deprive her of legitimate gain. She insisted on following her rule strictly in this matter.

Brother Moore says: "I went from that house saying to myself, 'There are more good people in this world than it gets credit for.' All day long these words kept ringing in my ears: 'I never charge a minister for staying in my house.' "

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1887, p. 19.

OLD SHOES—AND A JOB

The time was summer. Haying and harvesting were on. A city housewife was busy with her morning duties. A rap at the back door fell on her ears. Responding she beheld a young man poorly clad and apparently hungry. He told his simple story of no work, no friends near, and an empty stomach.

"But why do you come so late in the morning when breakfast long since has been over?" she asked.

"I was very tired last night and, having no money, I slept in the park. When at last I awoke the sun was high, the birds were singing for joy while I was hungry and penniless. If you can only give me a dry crust it will be sufficient. I do not want to put you to much trouble," were his deeply felt words.

Feeling for him in his hard lot she gave him bread—and much more. Besides she forgot about her Saturday's cleaning, sat down and together they had a pleasant visit. She learned that he could have a job on a farm if only he had a better pair of shoes. His own were almost soleless. Searching she found a pair of shoes with fairly good soles, not to mention their rather worn uppers. He said the uppers were not so important.

Next she saw that his socks had a superabundance of holes and that he had been walking with his feet next to the pavement. She added a pair of socks. His shirt too was mostly rags and his kerchief was beyond further use. A work shirt and a red bandana were the next addition to his wardrobe. Then she sent him to the garage to make the necessary changes. As he returned he looked better, walked better, talked better, saying:

"I'm feeling better. Thank you so much for your kindness. I know I can land that job and I can do the work for I was raised on the farm." So saying he was about to leave when the lady said:

"Sit down a minute. I have something further to say. You are out of money, but I smell cigarettes on your breath. Cigarettes cost money, injure your body and can do you not the least good. The money you spend for cigarettes would better be spent for food and clothes."

He interrupted her by saying: "What you say is true, but smoking helps me to forget myself and brings some pleasure."

"Yes, and a bad odor, and contributes to poor health in many cases. At any rate you have no money for cigarettes."

"But," said he, "it's a habit hard to break when once formed."

"Will you let a little cigarette be your master? I have filled your stomach, shod your feet, covered your back and given you a bandana to wipe the sweat from your face. These things may help you to land a job, but how long you can hold that job depends on how you tackle it. Give that man your best service. And remember, I expect you to make good."

And so they parted, she to her housework, he to tackle his new job. Neither knew the name of the other. Neither expected to meet again. It was only one of those chance interviews that cross one's path at times.

Two years passed by. Years have a way of passing by, never to be recalled. Not so with these two years.

Again the woman was working on the back porch when she beheld a fine dappled gray team

coming up the street. As they drew near the driver tipped his hat and smiled. Seeing that she did not recognize him he stopped, hitched his team to the post and drew near.

"I see you do not remember me, though I remember you quite well," he said.

"No, I do not recall ever seeing you," she replied.

"Didn't you give shoes, socks, shirt and bandana—and a good breakfast—to a hungry tramp two years ago?"

"Let me see. Yes, it all comes back, but what of it?"

"Well, I'm that tramp, only I have been living well and clean, landed that job and have held it for two years. Could have two other jobs but cannot leave my good boss—and that fine team. That team and I are pals. We simply cannot part. I wanted to stop and tell you that your help and advice put me on the right track. I have never forgotten you. I just had to stop and thank you again. I was down and out; you helped me up and on. I needed a friend; you befriended me. I will never forget you." He stopped short though she saw there was more that he felt like saying but could not.

Little had that woman thought one could do so much on a busy morning by simply feeding a hungry man, supplying his simple needs and showing a kindly interest. As he went down the walk to his team there seemed to ring in her ears these words: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me

meat. . . . I was a stranger, and ye took me in."
That night she included that man in her prayers.

"WHY DON'T OTHERS TALK THAT WAY TO US?"

Ever meet the boys who spend their summer vacation soliciting magazine subscriptions, thus helping themselves through school? Of course you did; they go everywhere and appeal to every woman, especially to those who have sons of their own. Most of these solicitors are genuine, though here as elsewhere the chiseler muscles in to the detriment of the honorable solicitor quite worthy of your patronage.

One good sister tried to help one such canvasser only to find that he was a fake and her money was gone. That put her on guard for the future. She had a pleasant half hour with one of these college boys who was planning to enter the medical profession and was largely on his own resources. After he had told his story she related her experience with the man who took her money but sent no magazines. She assured him, however, that she believed most of these boys were true and she was glad to help them on their way as she had had considerable experience with college boys and girls. She encouraged him in his ambition to be a doctor, telling him of the fine opportunities that come to the physician who enters the profession to help others rather than to make money.

In the course of the conversation she discovered

that the lad had fine ideals, but had formed some habits that, in her way of looking at it, would not help him get on in life. She spoke of these habits, encouraged him to drop them and form others that she was sure would prove helpful instead of detrimental. Nor did she fail to appeal to him because of his mother, and because of the other boys with whom he was associating daily. Somehow her words gripped him and touched a tender chord in his heart. About to leave her, he thanked her for her time, her encouragement, her subscriptions and her good advice. His last words were:

“Why do you talk to me as you do? Why don’t others talk that way to us when we are out and away from home?”

She replied: “I am interested in boys. I want to see them do well, amount to something. Boys are our men of the next generation now in the making. We cannot have good men unless we first have good boys.”

No, you need not buy from every caller, but every caller is your opportunity to say or do something that will make the day more pleasant and life more easy for those who ring your doorbell.

THE IDEAL WOMAN

The Book of Proverbs is a storehouse of wisdom, a gold mine of wealth. In the last chapter the writer turns to the ideal woman; she is married, the mother of children, the glory of her husband,

the idol of her sons and daughters. I commend it for repeated reading.

There have been many other ideal women and mothers. One of these passed away in 1940. Her son, Eugene H. Kahle, of West Virginia, wrote a brief but eloquent obituary of her and her work. It, too, deserves thoughtful reading and serious meditation. Here it is: "Kahle, Cynthia Jane, widow of W. T. Kahle, was born in Monroe County, W. Va., Sept. 10, 1856, and died on Dec. 5, 1940. At the age of fourteen she became a member of the Church of the Brethren. She was one of the charter members of Smith Chapel. She was the mother of eight children, now living, two of them ministers, W. M. Kahle and Eugene H. Kahle. Her great purpose in life was to serve God. In the founding of Smith Chapel she took two of her babies on a horse, one in her lap and one behind her, and rode over miles of country road getting contributions to build the church. She and her husband lived on a farm and did not have large incomes to depend upon, but she always held to the faith that God will help. She was a loyal giver. From her earnings she first took out the tenth, and used what was left for personal expenses. We children will never forget our evening family prayers. She asked God for things and expected to receive them. When the end came it was without suffering. We children feel that God gave us a wonderful mother. She set a standard that requires high living to measure up to."

to have
"THERE IS NO GOD"

"Good morning, lady, would you give me a bite to eat? I am really hungry. Had very little yesterday," were the words of a strapping big man to a little woman about to eat her dinner. Her husband had just eaten his noon lunch and gone to work. For a good reason she was not ready to eat when she had him sit down to the table. Thus her own lunch was still waiting to be eaten.

Looking him squarely in the face she said: "Why, yes, I will feed you. I have not yet eaten dinner, though it has been beckoning me. Be seated and I will give you what I had prepared for myself." So saying she turned to the kitchen and returned with a tray well loaded with appetizing food and a cup of hot coffee.

At first he protested that he did not wish to eat her dinner. Rather would he go hungry than have her be dinnerless. But she insisted that he should eat while the food was hot, saying that it should not be a hardship for her to go without one meal when he was forced to miss so many good meals. While he was devouring the food, just as a hungry man would, the following conversation was carried on.

"Why are you not working?"

"Not able to find a job though I have tried hard and long."

"Out of money, are you?"

"Yes, I hardly know what money looks like."

"Life has been unkind to you in this good world?"

"Lady, you don't know this world as I do. This is a hard world and the poor man has no chance."

"You are mistaken. God made this world and his is a good world."

"Don't talk to me about God. There is no God."

"Yes, there is and he is a good God. He made a good world. We ourselves have made it bad, if bad it is. Were it not for my faith in him and my experience with him I would never have given my dinner to you. I know that God is. He is my Friend, your Friend; my Father, your Father."

Her simple faith and absolute sincerity startled him. He had not heard such words for many a day. She had shared her dinner with him, nay, had given him, a stranger, her own dinner and was going without food for that meal. This was a new experience for him. Might there be a God after all, and was what she had just said true? Her faith and words reminded him of his own mother, now gone, often forgotten, but back in his own life again just then.

Dinner over, the conversation drew to a close and he arose to go. Her last words rang in his ears all day: "There is a God. If it were not for my faith in him and my experience with him I would never have shared my dinner with you."

As he trudged along the highway he said to himself: "Might she be right after all?"

"ME AND THE LORD"

After the Damascus experience Paul never got away from Christ. That's why he could write

his mighty and winsome epistles and sing the paean found in First Corinthians thirteen. He and his Lord were constant comrades. There have been others who learned to know their Lord and live with him. Enoch was not the only one who "walked with God."

After they had grown old Elder Samuel Studebaker and wife built a neat cottage hard by the Yellow Creek meetinghouse in Illinois and converted that house into a home. There's a vast difference between a house and a home. A house is a building in which you *stay*. A home is a place in which you *live*. After the husband had gone to his reward the widow continued to live in their home. One day as I was conversing with her I said:

"Grandma, do you live all alone in your home?"

"No, not alone, Brother Miller; me and the Lord," was her radiant response.

Somehow I never got away from those words. They helped me to understand Sister Studebaker better. When "me and the Lord" live together the world is altogether different.

FOLLOW YOUR GOOD IMPULSES

After a busy day with school problems the husband returned home to find his wife in a pensive mood. She was thinking seriously.

"And what is troubling you now, dear?" were his first words, for his good wife had hardly noticed his presence.

"I have had such a queer day, a new experience, and I just cannot get away from it."

"Not sick, I hope, are you?"

"No, not physically sick, but sick at heart. A kind of sickness that does not respond to medicine, and that insists on hanging on," was her reply.

"Come, tell me all about it," said he. "'A joy shared is doubled; a sorrow shared is halved.' What are wives and husbands for if not to share each other's joys and sorrows?" was his response.

And so she was led to tell her story something like this:

"I had planned my work for the day and was well on in the morning's program when suddenly there came into my mind an impression that I should go and see Sister Mollie. Now Mollie had not been in my program nor had I even been thinking of her. I tried to dismiss her, but Mollie persisted in coming into my work. I could not understand it. It was all so strange that I should think of her. And stranger still that I could not get away from Mollie. She so filled my mind that I could not think of my work. What was I to do?

"You may think it strange, but I dropped my work, changed dresses and went to call on Mollie. I really didn't know why except that I had to do it. And it was well that I went. Had I not gone I never could have been happy again—not even with you to share our mutual love."

"Do tell me what it is all about," said her hus-

band. "Indeed, I must know and know at once."

"When I came to the door and was about to rap, I heard a moan inside. I hesitated, listened, then knocked gently. The door opened and before me stood Mollie. Her wild eyes shocked me. She threw her arms about me. Crying bitterly she said: 'Jean, the Lord sent you to me. He knew I needed you. Oh, I am so glad you came.' She was continuing in this strain until I succeeded in quieting her a little, found a chair for her, and stood by her side. I asked her to tell me all about it, which she finally did in these words:

"I was just on the point of taking my life. Things have not been going so well in our home. You know my husband has nothing for the church and religion. Our only son has of late been somewhat estranged from home. It's been so hard for me. This morning I just felt I could bear it no longer. I knew I shouldn't do it, not even think of it, but I was helpless. I was just on the point of taking poison to end it all when you rapped on the door. Sister Jean, I know the Lord sent you to save me from this awful deed which I did not want to commit, but was about to anyway. I'm so glad the Lord sent you and that you came when he wanted you to come."

"She grew calm. We talked it all over between ourselves first. Then we talked to the Lord about it and were both comforted. At last I left her. She promised me she would do herself no injury. When we parted we both felt better. I cannot understand it at all, but I have an impres-

sion that God did send me to save Mollie's life this morning. May that be why I could not dismiss Mollie from my mind and why my work did not go as at other times? And may this be the way the Holy Spirit speaks to us and finds work for us to do?"

"Yes," said her husband, "and it would be much better, should we always follow the good impulses the Holy Spirit inspires within."

What of these two women later? They kept this to themselves. Life continued for years. Mollie did not commit suicide. She remained a devout Christian. Jean resolved to try to follow her good impulses in the future. "For," said she, "it may be the Lord is speaking to me at this very time."

FOLLOWING THE PRINCE OF PEACE

BRETHREN IN WARTIMES

Brethren believe in peace. From their very origin they were opposed to war on the ground that war is contrary to the teachings of the New Testament and diametrically opposed to the fundamental principles of Christianity. The spirit of war and the spirit of the Christ have nothing in harmony. There are other reasons why the Brethren have always opposed war and have not waged war, but their opposition to war is basically founded on their interpretation of the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and the sacredness of human life.

During the Revolutionary War the arrest of Christopher Sower, Jr., his imprisonment, the destruction of his printing business and the confiscation of his property are outstanding. During the War of 1812 the Brethren again were opposed to war. This was also true in the war with Mexico. The Civil War, because of its magnitude and duration again became a time of testing, persecution, imprisonment and fines. Here the outstanding case was the murder of Elder John Kline of Virginia. The Spanish-American War hardly raised the question of the conscientious objector. But the first World War presented a different situation. Look at it briefly.

The government at the time of the first World

War recognized the conscientious objector and made some provision for him. However, that provision was not such as to meet the situation. It did provide for noncombatant service and permitted the President to define what that noncombatant service should be. Naturally the President defined noncombatant service in harmony with the views of the militarist, and no militarist can readily understand the man who objects to war and to becoming a soldier in the army. The Christian conscientious objector not only objects to engaging in actual killing as a soldier; he also objects to any service that flavors of or leads to killing human beings. To him there is no basic difference between killing one man in private life and killing hordes in war. He considers both murder, and for him murder is anti-Christian.

A large number of conscientious objectors refused all service which the President defined as noncombatant because they felt that the service aided and abetted war. Because they would not accept the service many were herded in detention camps and prisons. Here their experiences varied, depending on the disposition of the individual, the attitude of the common soldiers, of the officers and of the government. Perhaps the truth could be stated thus: When an understanding objector met a sympathetic officer the relations were not serious; they had some things in common and each appreciated the other's viewpoint. But when an objector who could not explain his position intelligently faced a private or an officer who did

not understand the grounds of the objector and who was not in sympathy with the principle that a man's conscience is vital to his existence, it was far otherwise. In such cases abuses, persecutions and other illegal acts resulted. The records of some of these cases are too horrible to print. In general, however, it should be said that when these violations of and abuses of the law were reported to Washington, the government took cognizance and directed relief.

When the second World War came on Congress again enacted laws aiming at a large army and navy. At this time, however, the war machine and the government were eager to avoid the sad experiences of the first World War regarding the conscientious objector. The three historic peace churches—the Friends, the Mennonites, and the Brethren—got busy and interceded not without avail. Congress was in a mood to listen and recognized the human conscience. The war department was eager to be free from the objector. These three churches insisted that other objectors as well as their own membership should be recognized, yes, that even those who belong to no church should have their conscience respected. The result was the Civilian Public Service camp, financially supported and managed by the membership of these three churches, but under government supervision. Here was something new. All are waiting to see how this will work out in the end. It has great possibilities, calls for wise management, and requires large funds from the

membership. Christian objectors should appreciate what the government has done for them.

In the following pages will be found a number of incidents showing how the Church of the Brethren met the war situation during the Civil War. Because the first World War was so recent, and the present war is still in the making* I am taking incidents mostly from previous wars.

CARRYING THE TORCH

On Nov. 15, 1941, a meeting was held in Chicago to consider the conscientious objector and Civilian Public Service as provided by the government in lieu of active military service. Naturally the historic peace churches were represented. So were other organizations, even the military arm of the government. It was a history-making meeting.

Dr. Arthur E. Holt of Chicago University pointed out that for freedom of conscience and liberty to worship Europeans had fled to America, where they endured all kinds of hardships rather than be deprived of the liberties they claimed as their God-given rights. The Episcopalian and Congregational churches were leaders at that time. Later came the Methodists, who with their enthusiasm for evangelism located their church in every town and community. Now a new day has come. The historic peace churches are taking the lead

* These lines were written in the fall of 1941.

in this crisis when again the right of conscience is being challenged. It is to these peace churches that the world must now look for leadership. The torch which the Episcopalians and Congregationalists brought across the Atlantic and which the Methodists carried across the continent must now be borne by these three peace churches that have always stood for freedom of conscience and for the peaceful settlement of all problems, national and international.

If this analysis of the situation is correct, and there is some reason to believe that this is a true picture, then the Friends, the Mennonites and the Brethren have a great opportunity and a weighty responsibility. This is their day to show that their doctrine of peace and war is sound and workable. May it be they have come into being for just such a day as this? And will they be equal to the occasion?

A KEEN THRUST

During the first World War a committee from the Church of the Brethren was in Washington in behalf of the conscientious objectors. General Crowder, who had the matter in hand for the government, gave them a courteous hearing, suggesting that they state their case fully. In the course of the interview he turned to W. J. Swigart with this question: "How many divisions are there to your denomination?" (None of us, I trust, have ever been happy over our church quar-

rels.) When General Crowder heard the reply he smiled and said: "You are pretty good scrapers for a peace people after all."

During that war the government asked Mennonite groups to get together in their requests as it could not deal with so many varieties since the same problem was involved. At present the several Brethren groups have been co-operating. Is it not too bad that religious peace groups find it so easy to divide, and are brought together only in war crises?

Source: Personal interview with H. C. Early.

LINCOLN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

One day as my father was reminiscing about Civil War days he spoke of the attitude of the Friends, Mennonites and Brethren, who, from their earliest days, were peace people and refused to engage in active war. He said there were those who urged President Lincoln to force these people into war, insisting that it was not right to excuse them while others bore the brunt of the load. To all these appeals Lincoln replied something like this:

"No, I will not do that. These people do not believe in war. People who do not believe in war make poor soldiers. Besides, the attitude of these people has always been against slavery. If all our people had held the same views about slavery as these people hold there would be no war.

These people are largely a rural people, sturdy and honest. They are excellent farmers. The country needs good farmers fully as much as it needs good soldiers. We will leave them on their farms where they are at home and where they will make their contribution better than they would with a gun."

And so these peace churches were granted exemption from military service. Of course, those who were drafted and refused to enter the army had to pay their fine. I think father said he was required to pay \$300, even though he had a lame knee. The examining board recognized the lame leg but thought his build was that of a good soldier.

Someone may ask, "But did not farmers by raising good crops help the war?" They certainly did. When war is on there is very little a good man can do that does not in some way or other help the war, but that is not the same as being an aggressive fighter in the ranks, destroying property and taking human life.

UNDAUNTED IN DANGER

Most men can be brave in times of safety. Only danger reveals a man's metal. During the Civil War Elder Benjamin F. Moomaw of Virginia was put to the test. A public meeting was held to consider what course Virginia should take. A committee was appointed, of which committee Moomaw was a member. The committee recom-

mended that Virginia should not secede. There was, however, a high ranking judge who thought otherwise. He recommended secession and made a fiery speech which carried the crowd with him. When the vote was taken all sided with the judge, except one lone "No" which was cast by Moomaw, who became a marked man.

Later he was often put to the test. Preachers entered the contest. Three of the military type of divines spoke in a church where many young Dunkers and Mennonites were present. They urged entering the army. The next day Moomaw preached in the same church and presented the cause of peace and Jesus as the Prince of Peace. During the sermon some of the soldiers in uniform left the meeting and paced back and forth in front of the meetinghouse. Some feared trouble but Moomaw walked out boldly after the service and was not molested.

Some time after that sermon a stranger called Moomaw out of the Salem depot. When he stepped to the platform the man met him with an open knife and began cursing and abusing him. He allowed the man to spew out his venom and then said: "Sir, you can curse and threaten and swear, and take my life, if you will, but one thing you must understand, you are not going to intimidate me, and whenever you interfere with the rights of me or of my people, I will attend to you." That ended the matter.

At another time he was informed that a committee of three was ready to meet him. He knew the

men on the committee, and knowing their character, sent word that he was ready to meet a committee of *honorable* men at any time. The committee did not meet him but a voluminous correspondence followed. Finally the committee dropped the matter.

Brother Moomaw was influential with the Virginia legislature and with the Confederate Congress. He was one of the Brethren who secured military exemption for conscientious objectors, helped to raise money to pay the five hundred dollars individual exemption money and from his own fund contributed liberally when money was needed for this purpose or for the support of the needy. His life is a wonderful testimony that the Christian who does not believe in war and will not join the fighting army can do much to alleviate suffering, promote goodwill and courteously make known the Prince of Peace and the better way of life.

Source: Olive Branch of Peace, pp. 54-59.

"THAT BEATS MY RELIGION"

One of the pioneer Brethren preachers in Kansas was Abraham Rothrock, who left Pennsylvania in 1858 and settled nine miles south of Lawrence, Kansas. He is generally considered to have been the first Brethren elder in Kansas. When the drouth of 1860 struck the state he went east and raised funds for the Kansas sufferers, ac-

counts of which may be found in the *Gospel Visitor* of that period. Being a Brethren elder, he was naturally opposed to war.

After Quantrill and his three hundred desperados from Missouri had sacked Lawrence they appeared at the Rothrock farm home. Rothrock tried to reason with the outlaws. One of the rasher men shot him three times and then threw the wounded body into the cellar, saying, "That's the way we treat all — old preachers." Setting the house on fire the men withdrew while friends rescued the body and cared for the wounded man, who recovered and lived for seven years.

While he was convalescing from his wounds a Baptist friend and neighbor, a Reverend Tucker, dropped in to see him. Wondering what the "old preacher" thought of the situation now he said:

"Mr. Rothrock, what would you do if you had these men [his would-be assassins] in your power now?"

"I would convert every one of them," came the prompt reply.

"Well," said the other preacher, "that beats my religion." 

"WELL, SERGEANT, THE DUTCHMAN BEAT YOU"

During the Civil War a regiment of Confederate soldiers camped on the farm of a Brother Sanger. Being a Dunker he was naturally opposed to war. Nor was he a man to keep his convictions a secret. Discovering that he was opposed to war the sol-

ders suggested that they debate this question:

“Has a Christian the right to use carnal weapons?”

Sanger rather hesitated to accept the challenge for he was slow of speech and did not know what the outcome might be. Not that he was afraid, but he did not wish to stir up any hard feelings between the soldiers and his family. When they insisted on the debate he consented to put up his defense on condition that the soldiers would not become angry.

And so the debate began in the farmyard with a dozen soldiers present and continued for an hour with the best of feeling. Sanger happened to be well versed in the Scriptures and could quote readily. The sergeant who represented the soldiers in the discussion was also fairly well versed in the Bible. In the course of his argument Sanger quoted Isaiah 2:4: “And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

“I wish that were here now,” said a private in a low tone that was full of meaning.

The hour over and the debate ended, all in the best of humor, the soldiers scattered but not until they had rendered their verdict, which was:

“Well, sergeant, the Dutchman beat you.”

Source: Olive Branch of Peace, pp. 83, 84.

GREATER THAN ALL THESE

Just before the Civil War, when the war fever was rising rapidly, three ministers held a meeting near a Brethren meetinghouse in Botetourt County, Virginia, many believing that their object was to win over young men from Brethren families so that they would be ready to go into the army. The theme of their discourses was that war was compatible with Christianity.

This was near the home of B. F. Moomaw, who was ever ready to defend the peace principles of the church. On the following Sunday he replied to these three men, basing his remarks on Matt. 12:41, 42. In the audience were a number of soldiers, proclaiming war both by their uniforms and by their looks. Needless to say they were not in sympathy with Moomaw and he knew it. Holding out the Bible he said: "The three divines who addressed the assembly yesterday may be great men in their way, but behold a greater than all these is here. This is our guide, and may God forbid that I shall ever come into the presence of my Judge with the blood of my fellow man dripping on my fingers."

Those words struck the soldiers like an electric shock. Quickly they arose in a body, left the house and paraded back and forth on the outside. Unafraid, the minister continued, expecting that he would be arrested after the meeting. But he wasn't. Nor did they even molest him.

As I consider the situation I am impressed that the sincerity and zeal of the minister along with

his appeal to the Bible as the basis for his message had much to do with restraining the soldiers. Too often, I fear, our humanitarian and economic appeals as grounds for opposing war are weak when compared with the appeal to God's Word and his judgment upon those who wilfully disobey its precepts.

Source: Olive Branch of Peace, pp. 55, 56.

THEY WOULD NOT KILL

In July of 1861 Virginia passed a draft law which called into service every able-bodied man between the ages of eighteen and forty-five. This became a testing time for the Brethren, who were known as an industrious, loyal people but would not join the army. There were men who were not included in the draft, men who were willing to enter the army. Some Brethren secured substitutes from among this number, paying for a man's service all the way from \$800 to \$1,500. But not all were able to secure substitutes at that price because of lack of means.

Under these conditions the officers arrested those who were not willing to serve, or did not secure substitutes. These were hurried off to the army, a few being literally "hauled" thither. These men presented a new problem. The officers knew that you could by force drag a horse to the water but could not make him drink. They did not know that some men had as much sense and resolution as a horse. These men forced

into the army obeyed all orders but one: They balked when it came to shooting their fellow men. This it was that led General T. J. Jackson to make his memorable statement:

"There lives a people in the Valley of Virginia, that are not hard to bring to the army. While there they are obedient to their officers. Nor is it difficult to have them take aim, but it is impossible to get them to take correct aim. I, therefore, think it better to leave them in their homes that they may produce supplies for the army."

Our national government discovered during the World War that those conscientiously opposed to war could not be converted into efficient fighting soldiers; it also discovered that these men could not be handled as criminals. For that reason, when the selective draft law of 1940 was enacted, a more reasonable attitude was taken toward those who were loyal citizens, but could not and would not accept active soldier's service for conscientious reasons. That led to the Civilian Public Service provision for conscientious objectors.

Source: History of the Brethren in Virginia, pp. 97, 98.

SOLDIERS AT A LOVE FEAST

The Limestone Church of the Brethren in Tennessee was organized about 1847. Here the Annual Meeting of 1860 was held but, because of war clouds, the attendance was small. Another notable event in this congregation was the love

feast held in the fall of 1864. At that time a regiment of Federal soldiers was encamped on the church grounds. This raised the question of the propriety of holding a feast at such a time. The army officers advised the church to go on with the feast and assured all that no one would be molested. The feast was held without any disturbance.

D. P. Reed says that he and four others were baptized at this time. That the most cordial relations existed between the members and the soldiers is shown by the fact that one of the soldiers carried Brother Reed's coat to the room where the applicants changed garments.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1916, p. 17.

WINNING THE ENEMY

In July, 1861, the Fifty-first Regiment of the Confederate army of Virginia, about 800 men, came into the vicinity of Roanoke to undergo military training. Some, thinking thus to embarrass Elder B. F. Moomaw, suggested that Colonel Wharton, who was in charge, locate on the Moomaw farm where was a fine grove with a flowing stream. Moomaw gave permission and at once set about to win the friendship of officers and men, at the same time guarding not to compromise his Christian principles. One of the first courtesies was to invite the officers, about twenty, to dinner. Needless to say they all came and enjoyed the hospitality. It was then that the officers dropped

the remark that neighbors had directed them to this farm with evil intent.

It wasn't long until Moomaw was asked to preach in camp. He gladly accepted the invitation. Of the occasion he says: "I never felt more solemn, standing alone, and the soldiers seated around me on the ground, and I certainly never preached Christ, a peaceable Savior, a needed Savior, a suitable Savior, an efficient Savior, the Prince of Peace, with more earnestness than then and there."

During the encampment a malignant form of measles broke out and many of the soldiers contracted the disease. The Moomaws took many of the sick soldiers into their home and helped nurse them. Two of these died, one being a nephew of Captain Ross. Several of the little Moomaw children were continually with the soldiers, sat and slept in their laps but did not take the measles.

September came and the camp was about to move. Out of deep appreciation the men left the following self-explanatory testimonial of the fine fellowship that had prevailed between themselves and the Moomaws:

"Camp Jo. Johnston, Sept. 18, 1861.

"We, whose names are hereunto assigned, do take pleasure in testifying that the Rev. B. F. Moomaw has used every exertion in his power to render the invalid soldiers comfortable during our stay at his place, all free of charge for what he or his family did for us. Some of us have been in that home for six weeks, and, of course, have

been a great deal of trouble, for which he would not accept any remuneration. And, furthermore, we certify that the above-named B. F. Moomaw would not accept any pay of our friends who visited us while there, but was thankful for having it in his power to relieve our sufferings, which he cheerfully did in an eminent degree.

“And now we are surprised and troubled to hear that some vile and unprincipled wretch, or wretches, have circulated the report that he charged us for all that he did for us. We emphatically, peremptorily and flatly deny it to the fullest extent.”

A daughter of Captain Ross visited in the Moomaw home in 1891. She was much interested in the old camping ground and heard Brother Moomaw preach. She said that her “father was not a member of any church, but inclined to the doctrine of the German Baptist Brethren.”

Verily, it is still true that when a man’s ways please the Lord, even his enemies may be won.

Source: Olive Branch of Peace, pp. 58, 59.

THE PRISONERS’ SONG

Many Brethren were confined behind prison walls during the Civil War. Especially was this true in Virginia, where we had many congregations. They were imprisoned because they would not fight, would join neither army. They had varied experiences. It is a joy to know that they were considered good prisoners and gave the authorities little trouble. It seems they took their

religion with them even to prison. Daily devotions and preaching services were conducted. While John Kline was so confined in the courthouse at Harrisonburg, Virginia, he preached to his comrades on the two Sundays they were held as prisoners.

While a group of Brethren were prisoners at Mt. Jackson, they composed a hymn consisting of nine stanzas which they sang to the glory of God and their own consolation. Four of these stanzas follow. The chorus was written by John Kline while confined at Harrisonburg.

“We are in prison close confined,
But this not one of us should mind,
For Christ has told us in his Word
That we should always trust the Lord.

Chorus

“We’ll all go home as soon as freed,
A holy life with God to lead—
Yes, we’ll go home, and that to spend
Our days in peace till life shall end.

“We know it is God’s holy will,
Our fellow men we shall not kill;
That we should lead a Christian life,
And not engage in war or strife.

“But there is One who reigns on high,
He always will to us be nigh—
He will from prison us redeem,
If we will put our trust in him.

“Then let us all the Lord obey
And from the truth we’ll never stray;
So that we all may stand the test,
And when we die, go home to rest.”

Source: Olive Branch of Peace, p. 157.

"BUT THIS WAR IS AN EXCEPTION"

P. R. Wrightsman was both a minister and a physician. Though the Confederate Congress had provided exemption from military service for the three historic peace churches, many local authorities in Tennessee were casting Brethren into prison even after they had paid their fine of \$500. To meet this condition the Limestone church called a council meeting and drew up a petition to the Confederate Congress, seeking relief from this gross violation of the plain law covering the case.

But who should carry this paper to the proper authorities? Each begged to be excused. Wrightsman was away at school. Not being at the council he could not object when the vote was taken which laid that duty upon him. The deacons called on him and explained the action of the church that he should carry the paper to the Congress. He felt that older heads should do that, but the deacons insisted so he started on his way, being just 29 years of age, the same age at which Alexander Mack founded the Church of the Brethren.

Congress was in session at Richmond at the time. Wrightsman started for Richmond. On the train a minister took his seat next to him and, learning that the young man was also a minister, asked his church relations. Wrightsman remarked incidentally that his was a peace church.

"Do you not think we ought to fight for our glorious Confederacy?" said the minister.

"Christ taught us not to resist evil," came the prompt reply.

"Yes, but this war is an exception," said the minister.

To which the student replied: "Christ made no exceptions, but said: 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.'"

"Do you not believe that George Washington was a good man; and that God used him to set up this government?" was the next question.

The student replied, "Do you believe that God used General Washington to set up this government?"

"Yes," was the positive response.

"Then what do you think God will do with you for trying to tear down what he built up?" said the student.

To this there was only this response: the minister arose and withdrew to another coach. These two were the only civilians in the coach. All others were soldiers in the gray uniform. Many had stood around listening to the conversation. When they heard the student's last question they made some threats. The student had trusted his case to the Lord so was not alarmed, but continued on to Richmond, met the Congress, presented his cause in simple, sincere words, and received back his petition signed "Approved. Alexander H. Stephens."

Sources: Olive Branch of Peace, pp. 89-91. Brethren Almanac, 1870, pp. 24, 25.

IN RETROSPECT

IF I WERE YOUNG AGAIN

Yes, if I were young again, what would I do? Of course, if I could begin life anew with my years of experience as a guide, it might be that I would live quite differently. But that is impossible. The best a young person can do is to try to profit by the experience of others.

Howard Miller, editor of the Inglenook, asked a number of men and women to tell his readers what they would do if they were young again. Fourteen men and thirteen women give their statements in the Inglenook of April 28 and May 5, 12, 19, 1900. The editor said:

"All of us who have passed the noon hour have often thought we would like to have a second chance. With the experience we have had there would be a different management of affairs—possibly. Going back is impossible, but all our young readers with their chance at hand will do well to read carefully what these people have to say about it. It will also interest older people as well."

When it was all over the editor again spoke in these words:

"The results are interesting. Not one of them knew what the other was writing. . . . There are certain things that most of them agree upon, and these are that they would have a better education,

and they would accumulate a library. All oppose the tobacco habit, and recommend total abstinence. They agree that they would join the church earlier than they did, and would try to live a godly life in early youth and keep it up. They are practically a unit in saying that they would honor their parents. . . .

"Not one of them recommended money getting as a thing to strive after. . . . It is a wise young person who profits by the experience of others. There are two ways of learning, one by the experience of others, and the other by making the same blunders they did by not heeding directions. Unfortunately the latter is the commoner method."

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Now for brief excerpts of what some of them said. If you have access to the Inglenook of that time, you will enjoy and be benefitted by reading the statements in full.

* * * *

I certainly would do differently than what I have done. I would value more my youthful privileges. I would listen more attentively to the counsels of the just, rendered worthy by age and experience. . . . And as a result my life would be more serene and joyous, and the goadings of a guilty conscience would be averted.—George D. Zollers.

* * * *

I would give my heart to the Lord, and I

would study all I could of his Word. I would learn some trade. . . . I would master housekeeping, cooking and sewing. . . . I would seek Christian company.—Emma Culp Frantz.

* * * *

I would do as I advise boys to do. . . . A boy should be strictly honest, economical and never spend more than he earns. . . . Make the employer's interest his own and never do anything or be seen anywhere that he would be ashamed of before any person.—S. R. Zug.

* * * *

I should cultivate a cheerful disposition, search more diligently for the silver lining to the cloud, and not take life too seriously. I should play where I often worried, laugh where I often cried, commune with Nature rather than with harassed thoughts. . . . I should skip like a rabbit, sing like a lark, bound over fences and climb trees, even. Perhaps some folks might think me a little rowdish. What should I care for that? After all these years of experience, if I had them to live over again, I should surely know that a free and happy girlhood would do much towards preparing me for the place I now occupy, and more truly fit me to be a companion to the little ones who today twine their sweet arms around my neck and call me mama.—Sadie Brallier Noffsinger.

* * * *

I would unite with the church at twelve when God first called me, instead of waiting till twenty as I did because the church was not ready to re-

ceive me. I would study the Bible more carefully than I did and commit the important parts of it to memory. I would have a small library of the best books, selected by those who could appreciate the longing of a boy's heart after knowledge. . . . Other things I would have and do, but above all I would try, from boyhood to manhood, from manhood to age, to make fewer mistakes and be more helpful to others.—D. L. Miller.

* * * *

I would talk less and listen more. Everybody admires a bright-eyed, well-behaved girl, and I would try to be all that. I would do all that I could to develop the better side of my nature and be a Christian in every respect.—Mary M. Gibson.

* * * *

One of my highest aims would be to become daily more of a comfort and blessing in my home. I would especially study how to make my mother more comfortable and happy, and would do all in my power to lighten her burdens, by assisting in her work, by taking an interest in her plans, or by reading to her something bright and cheerful to drive away her cares. Then, too, I would tell her of the various happenings of the day about which mothers like so much to hear. No girl is likely to go astray who holds her mother as a confidential friend. . . . Instead of making my own happiness the sole purpose of life, I would study to make other people happy and thereby deserve and obtain happiness for myself.—Mrs. George B. Hollsinger.

I would join the Dunker church. . . . I would go only in good society. I would read the Bible every day. I would ask the Lord every day to take care of me and guide me. I would always be busy doing only good and useful things. . . . I would say only good things about other people. I would go to good places only. I would spend money for good things only. I would give to the poor. . . . I would find as soon as possible what my life-work should be, and fit myself for it especially. I would be ready to meet the Lord any day.—L. W. Teeter.

* * * *

I would aim to be more thorough and systematic in my habits, especially in study and giving. I am thankful that I listened to the advice of older people. I always aimed to have for my friends and associates those whose lives were true and good and whose influence was healthful.
—Wealthy A. Burkholder.

* * * *

Well, I'd first decide with all the purpose of my soul to be a man. Then I'd turn everything to this account. I'd act on the idea that it takes a good boy to make a good man. I'd calculate on great possibilities in myself. . . . I'd throw away the foolish notion of going west or somewhere else to be happy and successful. Home is the best place for a boy. I'd take care of my health as a precious gift from God, not overeat nor overwork, wash clean and sleep eight hours every night. I'd cultivate habits of industry and perseverance. Ev-

ery good thing is gained at the point of effort. I'd seize every opportunity for self-improvement. . . . Especially would I study the lives of good and great men. I'd seek the company of good men and good books, and would begin to build at once a library of my own, having the Bible as the chief book. I'd love my country and obey its laws. I'd read the newspapers, for they are the great educators of the people. I'd seek God early and give my life to his service.—H. C. Early.

* * * *

“Be a woman! On to duty!

Be not fashion's gilded lady,—
Be a brave whole-souled woman.”

Begin this good work in your home. Who needs your kindness, love and helpfulness more than those in your home? Do little kind acts to your parents, brothers, sisters. Speak kind words to them, and be a comfort to those in the home. Select good reading. Strive for an education. . . . It will make you more useful.—Ella J. Brumbaugh.

* * * *

I would not make many changes in performing my duties. I would deprive myself of some years' attendance in the “common school” and deny myself other pleasures that are so much enjoyed by girls in their “teens.” This I would do over again in order that I might for a half dozen years assist in nursing my invalid and helpless mother and look after the comforts of father and little brother.

Then after God would call mother to her long home, I would continue to take her place in the family and make the remaining dozen years of father's life comfortable and pleasant.—Rosie S. Myers.

* * * *

With the same surroundings I would be the same happy, contented country girl trying to become accomplished in every detail of the home-making art, which Newton declared to be the "truest and most practical of knowledge." . . . I would be careful to obey my parents, and my duty should ever be my pleasure, with an aim to reach my highest ideal of true womanhood.—Mrs. G. L. Shoemaker.

* * * *

Well, girls, I will tell you of one thing I would do if I had my school life to live over again; I would study my arithmetic lessons more than I did and put less time on other studies I like better. I would not live so much in a world of imagination. . . . I would cherish my Bible and a life of fellowship with Christ, as the only golden, happy way on earth.—Fanny Morrow.

* * * *

I would conclude that my parents with their superior age know more than I from twelve to twenty years and would seek their counsel and cheerfully obey them.—I. H. Crist.

* * * *

I would be just as kind as possible to everybody, especially my mother. I would try to show some

extra kindness to the poor, inefficient teacher whose circumstances made it necessary to cope with difficulties for which she was not prepared, and to the poor laborer, servant girl, cook, the wife or child of a drunkard, a criminal, or other despised person. I would banish the word "can't" from my vocabulary as a deadly poison. . . . Would love my fellow beings and let them know it.—Nancy D. Underhill.

* * * *

I would do some things just as I did do. When I was twelve years old, I selected my lifework and bent all my energies towards it. I never regretted that. . . . In the manner of working I could make an improvement in the way of attending to minor details. . . . I would begin to serve my Master six or eight years earlier than I did.—S. Z. Sharp.

* * * *

I would be scrupulously careful to keep my body as the temple of the Holy Ghost, and not make it a showcase. . . . I would do as Jesus did, "be about my Father's business." . . . I would esteem the words of my heavenly Father more necessary than food. I would want to be a pupil in the class to which Timothy belonged (2 Tim. 3:15). . . . I would want to be wholly the Lord's and live and work for his glory.—Hattie A. Balsbaugh.

* * * *

I would try and not let my conceit grow faster than my brain. . . . I would not try several things at once. . . . I would be strictly honest in all my

dealings, or work. . . . I would keep my promises strictly sacred. . . . I would read much in good books and meditate more; speak only when profitable. . . . I would weigh words more and cultivate a more correct form of speech.—Enoch Eby.

* * * *

Were I fourteen again I would first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I would keep the Word of God near me and consult it often. . . . I would fix it deep in my heart to be honest, prompt, faithful to my employers and true to my promises. Excelsior should be my motto in all I would attempt. I should study the best rules of etiquette, and be courteous and obliging to all.—Daniel Vaniman.

* * * *

I would spend no time building aircastles of glory and renown in the high positions, but improve the golden opportunities that come to me daily. I have observed that good boys make good men. Helping up would be my watchword. I would study to know myself and guard against evil ambition and evil habits. I would not seek military glory.—A. W. Austin.

* * * *

I would keep company with good people. . . . I would collect all useful bits of information and gems of poetry from papers and arrange them in a scrapbook. . . . Evenings should be spent at home in study or work of some kind. I would avoid all bad habits. . . . When I had made choice of a trade or profession I would stick to it. I

would always think of God as being good and kind, and thank him for his help in all I wished to do. I would read the Bible, attend church and Sunday school. I would be industrious, clever, sociable and courteous and be tidy in dress and habits. Be always truthful and honest.—Jas. A. Sell.

* * * *

Bro. Sell is now (Dec. 4, 1941) in his ninety-seventh year, has been a minister for seventy-six years and is totally blind. He wrote the above forty-two years ago. He is the author of two volumes of poems entitled *Twilight Poems*. It is only fitting that these selections by these many good folks close with his poem, *My Mother's Bible*.

My mother loved God's Holy Word,
It was her soul's delight,
Its precepts were her guiding star,
That led her life aright.
She taught her children to revere
The Savior's blessed name,
Assured that 'twould more pleasure bring,
Than any earthly fame.

My mother gave this Book to me,
Upon my natal day,
To be the compass of my life,
Through all its winding way.
Of all the gifts a mother's love
Chose for her children dear,
This is the surest guiding star,
To make life's pathway clear.

I'll lean upon my mother's gift,
And trust my God for grace,
'Tis here I find my strength and stay,
In life's laborious race.
It tells me of my Savior's love,
That won my mother's heart
And caused her like the one of old,
To choose the better part.

This blessed Book! My mother's gift
Is precious in my heart,
I'll keep it in my daily life,
And never from it part.
And when my earthly race is run,
And I approach the goal,
I'll trust my all upon its power,
To keep and save my soul.

DEALING WITH UNBELIEVERS

AN INFIDEL MEETING

In the Gospel Visitor for February 1853 the editor speaks of an infidel meeting that had been announced for Poland, Ohio, stating the facts and adding his own comments.

Several infidels were on a lecture tour in which they were speaking against the Bible and Christianity. The citizens of Poland considered how best meet the situation. To refuse admission to the lecturers would subject themselves to the scorn of some and the charge of narrow-mindedness.

When the infidels arrived they put up at the hotel and asked the proprietor where they could secure a large room for their meeting. He suggested the Methodist meetinghouse which they no doubt could secure. They met the man in charge, who at once granted the use of it.

"But how shall we announce our meeting to the public?" they inquired.

"All you have to do is to get a man to ring the bell on the meetinghouse, and the house will soon be filled," was the prompt reply.

In due time the lecturers arrived in company with the man who was to ring the bell and light the candles. The bell was rung, the men took their seats on the platform, but no one came. Again the bell was rung. The men waited in

silence, but no one came. Finally they left for the hotel without delivering their message because there was no one to whom they could deliver it. The next morning they left Poland never to return.

What had happened? The citizens had decided in their meeting that no one would go out to hear a lecture against the Bible and Christianity. And they stood by what they had decided. Not even a boy or a girl went contrary to the decision of their elders. The editor closes with these words: "This, we would say, is the best plan for Christians to pursue with regard to all these strange lecturers, spiritual rappings, etc., etc. Stay at home and let them have their infidel notions, their vagaries, their new revelations all to themselves."

"SOMETHING GOD CANNOT Do"

John Forney was a pioneer preacher in the West. His training came largely from life, not from school. Many were the miles he traveled by private conveyance and many the sermons he preached in pioneer settlements. He also practiced medicine. One Saturday afternoon he came to a farm home where he had often been entertained, though he had not been in that community for a long time. Inquiring about services in the schoolhouse for the day following he was informed that they no longer were having services.

"And why not?" Brother Forney asked.

"Because the infidel living in our midst has broken up the meeting."

"And what does the infidel do?"

"He sits on the front seat and asks questions to bother the preacher, so we discontinued the meetings."

"Put your boy on the horse and send him around among the neighbors to tell them that John Forney is back and will preach in the schoolhouse in the morning. Tell them all to come, and invite the infidel too."

The boy did as he was told and spread the news to all. Sunday morning found the schoolhouse with a capacity crowd. John Forney took charge and conducted the devotions. Before beginning his sermon he said:

"Usually the preacher does all the talking. I am not sure that this is always the best way to conduct a meeting. Sometimes others have something to say or may have questions to ask. Does anyone have a question this morning. If so, ask it."

"Yes," said the infidel, who straightened up on the front seat, "I have a question."

"Well, what is your question? Just ask it."

"You say God can do everything."

"Yes, I have often said that. I think he can do everything."

"Well, I know something God cannot do."

"And what is it that God cannot do?"

"He cannot make two hills without putting a hollow between them."

"Oh, I don't know about that. Anyways, back in Somerset County where I was born I saw where he often did that. He just piled one hill on the other."

A ripple of laughter passed through the audience. For once they saw the infidel beaten at his own game. The preacher asked if there were any more questions. There were none, and the meeting proceeded in orderly fashion.

"No CHARGES"

Once when M. M. Eshelman and my father were returning from a preaching tour in Wisconsin they were forced to spend the night in a hotel and wait for the morning train. Having registered and eaten supper they sat in the lobby with other guests. In due time the town loafer entered and sized up the group. Detecting two ministers in the number he began his regular harangue abusing the church, denying the truth of the Bible, cursing God and branding Jesus Christ as a bastard.

The hotel manager and former guests had often heard the same tirade, which was therefore not new to them. No one made a reply until my father took up the challenge. He had heard men like that before and knew his own ground well. Besides, he feared no infidel or atheist. Said he: "You may call me whatever you will, but you may not call my Lord and Savior a bastard and go unchallenged." And then he let loose and gave that

infidel such a scorching as he had never before heard. Nor were father's remarks made out of empty words. He was logical, cutting, convincing. When he was through there was silence in that lobby. Even the infidel had nothing to say. He arose, looked for his hat and with drooping feathers silently passed out through the door.

When the intruder was gone the manager broke the silence with these words: "You ministers are strangers to me. I do not recall seeing you before. I am glad you were here tonight and that you answered that man as you did. For more than ten years he has made it a practice to come in here and carry on as he did tonight. He has driven away many of my patrons by his blasphemies. He was always looking for ministers that he might vomit his vile charges against them. This is the first time he has been floored. There will be no charges for you two men. Your bill is canceled. Whenever you come this way stop at my hotel and you will be entertained without any charge."

"I'LL KILL HIM"

Bellwood '67

David E. Price in his stern preaching was not given much to telling stories to fix the truth he presented, but when he did deviate he usually used an incident that was not readily forgotten. I well recall two of his stories that illustrated the supremacy of love over force and hate.

A certain brother purchased a piece of land. After he had made the purchase neighbors told

him he had made a mistake, that the farm joined that of an infidel who was hard to get along with and insisted the fence between the two farms was not properly placed. In fact, it was because of the dispute about the line fence that the former owner had just sold the farm. The good brother, however, was not worried but said, "I'll kill him."

"Kill him? We understand that you are a Dunker and the Dunkers do not kill, even refusing to serve as soldiers in war. How do you explain this?" said the new neighbors.

"Oh, I'll kill him with love," was his ready reply.

That was a new idea to them so they waited to see how this kind of murder would work out. No sooner had the brother located on the farm than the infidel came and told him that the fence between them was not on the line and that it must be moved. The brother asked where the line should be. The infidel at once set the stakes and said that there it must go. The brother did not object to this, but insisted that it be set even two feet farther on his land than the infidel had staked it, saying that he wished him to be entirely satisfied and the little land would be a small matter compared with a friendly and satisfied neighbor.

When the infidel saw the fairness of the brother and his willingness to go even the second mile he changed his attitude and said, "We'll just leave that fence where it is," and that ended the line fence matter. But later another problem arose.

One day the brother's cattle broke into the

corn field of the infidel and did some damage. The infidel flew into a rage, called on the brother and declared he would sue him for damages. The brother kept cool and explained that such a course was not necessary, that he was ready to pay in full for all the damage; in fact, he wanted to pay in full. He suggested that each select one man, that these two select a third, and whatever these three assessed as the damage he would gladly pay at once, explaining that lawyers and courts merely add unnecessary cost.

As the infidel thought this over his temper died down and he came to his senses. Seeing that he could not quarrel with his new neighbor, because he was strictly honest and was every ready to do the right he said, "Why choose others to arbitrate? We can settle that ourselves. There are no damages. The matter is settled. I never before met a man like you. No one can quarrel with you."

Thus did the good brother kill the infidel with love.

FUNERAL OF A WICKED MAN

Ministers are often put to the test when they are asked to preach funerals. Just what to say on such an occasion is not always easy. The conscientious preacher will guard well his words when so tried. James Quinter was once asked to preach the funeral of a bad man. Before dying the man himself had made this request. During the course of the sermon Quinter said:

"Why did he want me to preach his funeral? Why did he not get one of his associates in sin to preach his funeral? Why did he not ask to be buried in the back yard of the brothel, where he was in the habit of meeting his drunken associates? He asked to be buried in the graveyard of the Fairview meetinghouse of Pennsylvania."

I do not have the answer Quinter gave to these questions. Perhaps they needed no answer. The questions are, however, an index to what the answers might have been.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1910, p. 13.

PREVAILING PRAYER

LEARNING TO PRAY

“More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.” It was a great day in the life of the apostles when they came to Jesus and said, “Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.” That request was made after they had heard him pray. It is a great day in the life of any teacher when he discovers that his pupils are imbibing his teachings to the extent that they want to be like him.

Jesus found fellowship and strength in prayer. He practiced prayer and taught others how to pray. The saints of all ages have ever resorted to prayer under all conditions. James says, “The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.” Sit down with those who have power in prayer and they will tell you that such power comes only through continued and earnest practice.

UNITED PRAYER

“Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.”

J. S. Flory tells the story of a conversion in West Virginia years ago. Many were making the good confession and were being baptized. One poor girl, still in her teens, was living with her father and brother. She was under conviction,

but her father opposed her strongly, saying he would drive her from home and would commit suicide if she would become a Christian. The girl was greatly troubled. The struggle between parental duty and what she felt she should do was severe.

"What shall I do?" she asked the preacher.

"Take it all to Jesus and he will tell thee what to do," was his reply.

She sought a private room in the house in which they were, at the home of a brother. Brother Flory also sought a secret place for prayer. Later they both came from these two secret places of prayer. He at once saw that she had won the victory. Said he:

"Thank the Lord for his goodness; you will be baptized with the rest today."

"Yes," was her sweet reply. "My father cannot save me, but Jesus can; come what may, I am resolved to do my duty."

As the evangelist left after the close of the meetings he said to this girl: "You have taken Christ as your Savior for your soul; take him also for your bodily healer."

At the time she had poor health, the belief being that she was suffering from consumption. Twenty-five years later he met her again, earnest, happy and strong.

What of the father? Did he drive her from home or kill himself? He did not. The girl had an overcoming faith, and an overcoming faith wins.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1898, pp. 32, 33.

SURPRISED THE DOCTOR

When Ida C. Shumaker was being considered for appointment to the India mission field she was teaching school, a frail girl with health impaired, according to the diagnosis of her physician, who said that she could work here in America but could not endure the climate of India. He insisted that if she would go to India she would die of tuberculosis in a short time, that it was suicidal for her to attempt the work. Of course, a doctor should know all about those matters. It is his business to know so as to advise us what to do.

Ida, however, was willing to run the risk. The board was willing to send her, so she went to India. When she went, she went with the conviction that the Lord had called her, and if he called her he would sustain her. She had an overcoming faith and believed that prayer has a place in the life of the Christian.

Her first term of service over, she returned to America for her first furlough. Going to her old home town she fell in company with those who knew her when she was teaching. They were surprised how she had developed while in India. She was heavier and healthier. One day she met her doctor, eager to see him again. At first he did not recognize her. When he did recognize her he stopped, looked at her in surprise, simply saying, "Miss Shumaker!" Her reply to his exclamation was this: "Doctor, I understand your shock. You see the Lord can do wonders for those who trust

him. He can answer our prayers and bestow health."

"I see," was his laconic reply.

LOST VOICE RESTORED

C. H. Balsbaugh was born with a weak physical constitution which remained with him throughout life. He was eager for an education, but his health failed and for seven years he was forced to use slate and pencil because he had lost the use of his voice. Slowly his voice returned and he could again speak. Again his voice left him and he had to resort to writing. This time he remained speechless for thirteen years.

After extensive reading and writing he wrote to Dr. Charles Cullis of Boston concerning his condition, stating all that the doctors had been trying to do for him. He had come to the conclusion that medicine and surgery could not restore his voice, but that if it ever should be restored it would be through the power of God. Dr. Cullis informed him that there was an appointment at Boston, in which he and his helpers would participate . . . "when prayer would be made for the recovery of my voice between three and four o'clock in the afternoon of September 30th, 1884. The dispatch came fifteen minutes before the appointed time. I went upstairs, entered my closet, closed the door, and sank on my knees and prayed one hour with my supplicating friends in Boston. At four o'clock I came downstairs, using my voice,

and have used it ever since. . . . 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; . . . '

Needless to say that he continued to have the use of his voice from that day on till death. Yes, God still answers prayer.

Source: Glimpses of Jesus, p. xxvii.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH

James Quinter had the prayer habit. His days began and closed with prayer and the hours between were not prayerless. He had profound faith in the efficacy of prayer. As a result his prayers bore rich fruit. The following, taken from *Life and Sermons of James Quinter* (pages 29, 30), reveals his prayer life:

"All his visits among the brethren were marked by a devotional spirit, and many have testified to the encouragement they received from his words of Christian counsel and his earnest prayers. An incident which occurred on this first tour among the churches illustrates the prayerful spirit of his life. While the brethren were in Hopewell Church, Bedford county, they were called one night to visit a home in which the daughter was afflicted with epileptic fits. As they stood looking upon her suffering, he said: 'Brethren, let us pray'; and, kneeling, he prayed fervently in her behalf. She was relieved at the time, and her affliction never returned. This incident and the spirit

manifested did much to dispel the prejudice which many were disposed to feel against him on account of his youthful appearance.

"Every opportunity to promote the cause of Christ and to present the theme of salvation was gladly improved. Though the calls oftentimes involved personal sacrifice, he was none the less ready to heed them. At one time, while teaching at Lumberville, he was called to visit and pray with a young woman who was suffering from smallpox. As he could not bring upon his pupils the danger of infection, he closed his school and responded to the request. He felt it to be a call to duty, and, though fully aware of the danger incurred, he trusted the Lord would protect him. He escaped and when all danger of infection was past he reopened his school."

MORE GRACE TO LIVE

When the Conference of 1929 was held at North Manchester, Indiana, Wilbur B. Stover and a number of others had rooms in one of the dormitories. When Wilbur suggested morning prayers for those who were disposed to be around in the early morning hours, another suggested that they meet for prayers before retiring, thus leaving the morning hours free. Wilbur's ready response was:

"Yes, my brother, we need prayers in the evening before we go to sleep and even more in the morning before we go to work because it takes more grace to live than to sleep. That is why I

suggest the morning devotions. What about that?"

Needless to say others saw the point in the statement and every morning at an early hour a group gathered for worship, simple and sincere, because they felt they needed grace from above to live the day aright.

STILLING THE STORM

When the Brethren fled from Creyfert and took passage for America they encountered a very severe storm at sea. In mid-ocean mountainous waves buffeted their frail sailing vessel and the Flemish crew felt that all was about to be lost. In their effort to outride the fury of the waves, the crew lowered the sails and began to throw overboard much of their merchandise, all to no avail.

In despair the captain went down into the hold of the ship, where the Brethren had their quarters because they were too poor to pay for better accommodations. Here to his amazement he found the group engaged in prayer and singing. He had never seen the like before. "Surely these people must be God's chosen," were his thoughts. "Otherwise they would be fearing for their lives as I and the crew do." He returned to the deck, urged the frightened crew to take courage and expect a stilling of the storm, because the Almighty would not allow such pious people to be lost on the deep. The crew took courage and soon the storm ceased as once on blue Galilee when the

Master spoke to the winds and the waves became calm. We too seldom read Psalm 107:23-31, and so forget God's protecting care.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1890, p. 11.

FAMILY WORSHIP

In June 1940 I stood by the grave of Elder John Horning Umstad in the cemetery of the Green Tree church in Pennsylvania. It was an inspiration to kneel and read the inscription on the stone, the last line being "Rest from thy labors." I had read and heard much of this grand old man's life and work as a minister.

Family worship was a vital part of the life in his home every morning before breakfast. Prayer was woven into the warp and woof of his being. While building a barn a number of carpenters lived in the home. To save time and money he omitted family worship the first morning. That was something new in his home. He was troubled all through the day, in fact, convicted of sin.

The second morning he called the family and working men together and said: "We have been accustomed each morning to assemble around the family altar, but I thought we would pass by our family devotions while you workmen are here. I am convicted, however, that I was wrong, so we will have our worship."

The men respected and loved him for holding to his principles. At least two of them were converted while building the barn.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1899, p. 11.

DEACONS IN ACTION

DEACONS

The New Testament recognizes and gives to the deacons a large place. There is a difference of opinion whether the seven chosen in the sixth chapter of Acts were "deacons" or simply a special committee set apart for specific work. But there is no doubt that they did a good work and two of them became outstanding evangelists. Formerly deacons in the Church of the Brethren operated in a wide and needy field. They looked to the needs of the poor, made the "annual visit," which in a measure was a pastoral visit in a day when there were no supported pastors. They assisted the ministers in the regular church service. When no minister was present it was their duty to take charge of the Sunday service and at least lead in a devotional period. As deacons have been crowded to the rear the church has found it necessary to use a substitute, such as the every member canvass. In days gone by the office of deacon provided a proving ground in which men were trained and through this office scores and scores found their way into the ministry and other church activities. There is a place for deacons.

THE DEACON'S GOOD ADVICE

Of his early preaching Daniel Vaniman, a great church leader, says: "When I first began to preach,

a venerable old deacon said: 'Bro. Daniel, I want to tell you something; when you go out to preach, don't pull other people's houses down or they will fight you. You build a better one by the side of theirs and invite them over.' " That was good advice and Daniel followed it all through his eventful life.

Daniel had the happy faculty of going direct to his subject. No long introductions and aimless wanderings when he preached. He knew just what he meant to say and said it in the fewest and simplest words at his command. He had one, not six, conclusions to a sermon. When he was through he stopped talking. He had always felt that some day he would be called to the ministry so began preparing himself early. When he was called he was ready to go to work at once.

His Chips From the Workhouse as they long appeared in the church paper were read and appreciated by many. There was always something worth reading when he wrote.

Source: Tract, The House We Live In.

WE CAN STILL USE DEACONS

For the following story I am indebted to John W. Lear, who while pastor of the Decatur congregation, Illinois, had a deacon who not only knew how to "deke" but "deked" regularly and efficiently.

Dan Cripe was a church member and a deacon.

By occupation he was a blacksmith. He was a good blacksmith and worked at his trade to the satisfaction of his patrons. Like Carey, the shoemaker, who made shoes for a living, but became the great missionary, so Dan Cripe shod horses for a living but his business was being an efficient deacon. Heating the iron, driving nails, looking down on the anvil did not occupy all of his mind. He had a wider horizon.

Dan Cripe had a very ordinary school training. Many a man with a college and even a seminary training has failed to use his education for the glory of the Lord and the good of his neighbor as Dan used his limited training. Being denied a good schooling did not hinder Dan from reading his Bible and following its teaching.

Dan Cripe knew his neighbors, met the folks at church and loved people. He also appreciated his religion and was devoted to his Lord. He never lamented the fact that he was only a deacon and not a preacher, nor like the man with one talent did he lay it aside to be returned to his Master when called for. Far otherwise. After the day's work was done Dan Cripe sat down to the good meal prepared by his wife, then took his Bible and called on someone who was not yet a Christian and together they read and studied the Bible. Many were the calls thus made and the evenings thus spent.

Well, what of it?

Dan Cripe was a keen student of human nature. He sensed the psychological moment when he

should step aside and turn the seeker after truth to his pastor. Many were the times when his pastor was told: "Brother Lear, I think so-and-so is about ready to join the church. I believe that a call from you would help bring him to a decision for Christ."

Said Brother Lear: "Many were the souls won through the humble and sincere efforts of Deacon Dan Cripe. If I were looking for an assistant in pastoral work I'd like to have another Dan Cripe."

ALWAYS A DEACON

In speaking of the life and work of Elder Samuel Zigler, who grew up on the banks of the Shenandoah River at Timberville, Virginia, Daniel Hays says:

"Eld. Zigler never preached much; but when it came to overseeing the church, he was as good as any. He carried the deacon office with him through the ministry and into the eldership—which goes to show that a man need not be an able speaker in order to become an efficient elder. He visited much from house to house, and in the mission field in West Virginia he often went with the brethren on the yearly visit, where his fatherly counsel was much appreciated. When the time came by reason of age that he could no longer visit the members in this way, he was still in their hearts in loving remembrance of him, and the fruit of his labors may still be seen in the order and deportment of those who came in touch with his work."

Blessed is that man who, regardless of official position, discovers the field in which he is best fitted to labor and then bends all his energies to do the work for which the Lord has fitted him and to which the church has called him.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1903, p. 33.

ONLY A DEACON

He wasn't a preacher. He wasn't a Sunday-school teacher. He was only a church member—and a deacon. Being only a deacon in the church he was not expected to have much to do. Usually he slept well and long. But one night he just simply could not sleep, no matter how many sheep he counted. His mind flitted from one thing to another, from one person to another. Finally he thought of the man in the tower.

Let's call the man in the tower Jim because that is not his name. We want him to be nameless so that we may know him the better. It was two o'clock in the morning when the deacon's mind settled on Jim. Just why he did not know. Jim continued to loom big in the deacon's thought. Finally he could stand it no longer. He arose, dressed and made his way through the darkness through the railroad yards to Jim in the tower. He found Jim awake. Jim had to keep awake because of his tower duties. Contrary to his usual hesitancy to speak the deacon explained why he was calling at that hour. He was concerned for the salvation of Jim, who was not yet a Christian.

He found Jim in a receptive mood. He was ready to talk over his soul's welfare. Together they talked. Together they prayed. Evidently the deacon was divinely directed so that he and Jim met at the proper time and place. Do you recall how Philip was led to join himself to the eunuch in his chariot? In a similar way the deacon was led to Jim in the tower. Before he left Jim made his confession and resolved to become a Christian. Here was another deacon doing the work of an evangelist. There is still a field for the deacon who will submit to the leading of the Spirit.

TOBACCO

IT CAN BE DONE

A good habit is a friendly helper; a bad habit is a stern master. A good habit makes you strong; a bad habit makes you a weakling. Many have discovered, when it was too late, that they were slaves to the tobacco habit. Either they were or thought they were unable to break the habit. Others have risen in their strength and quit the use of tobacco after having used it many years. Here are three examples that have come under my personal observation.

Case one. This brother had used tobacco many years—chewed it, smoked it, liked it. Had learned it in the home of his father, whose doctor had advised its use to prevent diphtheria—only for the boys, however. He married, raised a family of four girls and one boy. He often “quit” the tobacco habit only to begin it again a few days later. On his fourteenth birthday the lad said to his father: “Dad, here is my hand and my pledge that if you will quit the use of tobacco, I will never chew, smoke, drink, or gamble, and will live a clean life. What do you say?”

The father hesitated a moment, extended his hand and said, “I’ll do it, son.”

That pledge was easier made than lived up to. About the third day the old appetite asserted itself as on former occasions when he had resolved to

quit. This time his pledge to his only son warned him that he must keep his word. And he did keep it. For several months the battle raged. Never again did he use tobacco. He proved it could be done. One thing that helped him was this: He always spoke against the use of tobacco and urged others to do as he had done.

Case two. This brother did not smoke but how he did chew! His young son had as one of his tasks the emptying of the ash pan of the cook stove. He complained bitterly and often cried, declaring that he would never empty it again because dad's tobacco spit made the ashes stick so that they were hard to remove. But dad continued to chew. J. M. Mohler held a series of meetings in that community. One evening he preached a strong sermon against tobacco. The father heard every word. Arriving at home after the evening services, he went directly to his tobacco on the shelf, opened the stove door and was about to throw it in. His wife asked what it meant. He explained that he was quitting the use of tobacco. She reminded him that he had quit before only to begin so he would better lay it aside and see whether he would really put his resolve into lasting effect. He said, "No, this time I am quitting," and in went the tobacco.

Did he quit? He did but not without a struggle, fierce and long, but he won. He, too, began to speak against the use of tobacco as he met other users. He grew heavy and his health was not so good. The doctor advised him to use tobacco

again as that was the cause of his trouble. He refused, declaring that he would die rather than go back to the nasty habit. He lived well along in the sixties before death claimed him.

Case three. My barber was long a cigarette fiend. Finally he decided to quit and he did. The old appetite pestered him continually. He paced the floor in his misery. His wife urged him to smoke just one and get temporary relief but he refused. He fought on and won. He has not used cigarettes for a number of years now nor has he any desire to use them.

It can be done. These three did it. Many others have done the same. But it cannot be done without strong will power. It all depends on whether one is master of himself or a weakling, a slave to his appetite.

TIME TO CHANGE DOCTORS

Once when the tobacco question was being discussed at Annual Meeting certain speakers made a plea for those who use tobacco for health reasons, claiming that their physicians recommended it. In the course of the discussion Andrew Hutchinson arose and in his own way answered that part of the problem. He said that he had heard that excuse by others and for a long time. He even knew some Brethren who had been using the filthy weed for more than forty years, all under the direction of their physicians. During all that time tobacco had not worked a cure and yet they had

used it regularly. He said if his physician were to recommend the same remedy to him for forty years and he had used the remedy so long without relief he would think it time to change doctors.

WILLIAM HOWE AND TOBACCO

The Brethren attitude towards tobacco through the years is well-known. Some ministers have handled the problem wisely, some otherwise. William Howe was expert in dealing with such a problem. Two stories must suffice.

Once he was called to a certain congregation to conduct a series of meetings. The first morning after his arrival at the place of meeting he looked over the country and saw what appeared like large barns on the neighboring farms. Turning to the man at whose house he was staying he asked who resided at the several places where the large barns stood. The host informed him that these were not barns but tobacco sheds. Hereupon Howe asked him whether all the Brethren in that congregation raised tobacco. "All but one," was the reply.

"Then he is the only brother who can *misrepresent* you at Annual Conference," said Howe.

The meetings began and the interest ran high. One night the evangelist announced something like the following:

"You have all been wonderfully kind and attentive during these meetings. I know not how to account for it, unless it is because I have said nothing about tobacco. I now announce that tomorrow

night the sermon and the illustrations will deal with tobacco. I make this announcement so that any who do not wish to hear it may stay at home. After tomorrow night I will not refer to tobacco."

Tomorrow night came. So did the audience—much larger than before. The house was packed. No one remained at home. It was a sermon on tobacco. Howe had wonderful descriptive powers, a pleasing and musical voice. He knew how to tell a story. Not for a moment did he fail to hold that audience. At the close of the sermon he announced that the invitation that evening would be different. It would be for sinners, all sinners, those in and those outside the church. Even those who used that nasty weed, tobacco, were invited to come forward with other sinners, if they were ready to clean up.

Sinners came forward—and they say even a few church members were in the number, ready to give up the tobacco habit.

DRINKING

BISHOP JOHN GANS

The time, 1804. The place, Nimishillen Township, Stark County, Ohio. The man, John Gans, who moved from Columbiana County to a farm about a mile south of Harrisburg. John Gans was the first minister and elder of the Nimishillen Church of the Brethren, which was organized soon after his arrival, for, mark you, John Gans was a minister in fact as well as in name. He was familiarly known as "Bishop" Gans, and that means something. It was in the days of no meeting-houses, and of the free ministry. But that does not mean that the worship was not genuine and that the preaching was poor. Far otherwise.

Bishop Gans died early in life and was buried on the Matthias farm near Harrisburg. His grave is lost, but his will remains and is a commentary on social life of the day when John Gans preached, and may be a clue to some of his sermons. Today, as when he wrote it, stands the clause in the will of John Gans that forbade the use and presence of liquor at his funeral and sale. Outmoded now for Brethren but needed then. Much like the clause in a deed conveying a tract of land at Franklin Grove, Illinois, on which our people were about to erect a house of worship, which deed forbade holding love feasts in said house. And why? Because a wooded pasture bordered the church lot

and the grantor of the deed feared that "rowdies" at times of love feasts might break down the fence and his cattle leave the pasture. Needless to say that long before that meetinghouse was destroyed by fire love feasts were held without any protest, because "rowdies" no longer annoyed those engaged in the sacred ordinances of the Lord's house.

Source: History Church of the Brethren, Northeastern Ohio, p. 18.

A CONGREGATION THAT PIONEERED

The first congregation in the state of Indiana was Four Mile, organized in 1809; the second was Nettle Creek, organized about 1820. Three outstanding items in the history of Nettle Creek, over which Lewis W. Teeter presided many years, are: 1. Its Sunday school, which dates from 1868. 2. In 1863 the congregation held its first Thanksgiving service, which became an annual event thereafter. 3. The distillery problem.

Those were pioneer days and folks were not wealthy. Making a living became a most serious problem with many. Private distilleries were numerous—even Brethren were engaged in making whiskey, although as early as 1778 Annual Meeting took a stand against the liquor business and asked Brethren not to engage in it. Well, in 1840 some Brethren in Nettle Creek fell under the condemnation of the church because they made whiskey.

In handling the matter the church pleaded with

its members not to make liquor. Some heard the church and some did not. Two individuals are worthy of note. The one said he prized the church more than his distillery and abandoned it. He engaged in an honorable business, prospered and died a wealthy man. The other said he must run his distillery or face financial ruin. He was disfellowshipped, failed financially and died a poor man.

It does not necessarily follow that those who abandon distilleries become wealthy, nor that those who run them die poor, but this congregation was headed in the right direction when it decided that it could not hold fellowship with distillers. Annual Meeting was right in 1778; Nettle Creek was right in 1840. Churches today that exclude from their communion makers and dispensers of alcoholic drinks are going in the right direction.

To TREAT OR NOT TO TREAT

Fifty years ago there was a feeling that the Church of the Brethren should do more city work. Uncle Johnny Metzger was strongly of this opinion. He went to St. Louis and attended a Salvation Army meeting. Urged by the leader to speak he did so, limiting himself to the set five minutes. He made such a good impression that he was asked to be present at three o'clock the following day (Sunday) and preach. Sunday afternoon came and he was on hand early. First he preached to

a crowd in a park, then to some 500 at the river-side, inviting both crowds to the meeting at the Army Hall. In the evening he again attended the services, when the leader asked him to speak from the balcony to the crowd outside. He did so and continued his preaching, also visiting from house to house. During the first week he had four applicants for baptism, and by the end of the month four more.

At the Conference of 1881 an offering was taken towards erecting a meetinghouse in St. Louis. Other funds were secured and entrusted to Uncle Johnny, who was not willing to begin building operations until all the money was in hand. By 1883 the funds were on hand and the building was begun, all under the direction of the good preacher. Then something strange happened. The workmen struck and said they would not complete the job unless Uncle Johnny would treat them with either beer or whiskey. Of course he could not do that. On the other hand, the workmen were insistent. They meant just what they said.

What would have been your way out—treat or not?

Uncle Johnny settled in a way entirely satisfactory to the men and without violating his conscience.

Watermelons were ripe and sweet. He brought in a lot of these—so many and so good that the workmen ate with zest, and then, returning to their work, completed the meetinghouse, in which

many worshiped and many found their Lord.

Source: A Model Life or Uncle John Metzger on Earth, pp. 53-56.

JOHN LUCAS—TEMPERANCE MILLER

John Lucas, the miller, left North Carolina and settled on the Miami Bottoms of Ohio near Post-town. Being a miller he soon selected a site for a new mill, assembled the material for building and announced the day for the "raising." This was back in 1827 when views on temperance differed as they do even today. Lucas was established in his total abstinence principles. Many of the men and boys who met for the raising were established in their drinking habits.

Here was a problem that had to be solved.

It had long been the habit to treat the men and boys to whiskey on such occasions. It had also long been the habit of Lucas not to put the bottle to his neighbor's mouth. The men refused to help unless Lucas would provide the whiskey, but he would not do this. On the first day the men went home, and the mill timbers were not raised. The same conditions prevailed on the forenoon of the second day. On the afternoon of the second day some of the men began to help, and runners were dispatched to invite temperance men to come and join in the work.

On the third day two groups assembled, the drinkers and the abstainers. In the grocery store near the mill the drinking group gathered and

boasted that the mill could not be raised without their help. The other group was determined that it must go up. Discussions grew warm. The workers were fewer than the shirkers but they were not to be outdone. When evening came, there stood the frame of the mill, erected without a drop of whiskey. John Lucas had won and had turned the day into a victory for the cause of temperance.

Landon West vouches for this story as it was told him by old Brother John Crissman, who had been present and had helped to raise the mill.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1891, p. 13.

REFUSED TO CARRY THE BOTTLE

Customs change. To judge the merits of an act one must often consider when and under what conditions the act was committed. Even in Old Testament history one detects a gradual unfolding of moral standards. I once heard Harry Emerson Fosdick say that his grandfather, a Baptist minister, on a holiday might come home after a number of calls on his parishioners and show the effects of the friendly glass which then was common. Nor did he hold that against his grandfather because in that day the intoxicating glass was not in disrepute as it is today. While we may not hold it against others for doing what we now consider wrong, we must always honor those who live so far ahead of their time that they refuse to do what others sanction because they considered it wrong.

As an illustration of youth living ahead of its day I may cite these words of Benjamin F. Moon-maw in the Inglenook for April 28, 1900, page 2: "As was the custom in those days, part of my business was in hay-making and harvest to carry the bottle to the fields; but before long I told father that I would not do it." By "bottle" he did not mean water which was carried in the jug, but whiskey. Men then thought they needed a little whiskey in hot weather to cool them. Strange that the same men thought they needed whiskey in cold weather to warm them.

We know better now. Forget what men then thought but remember young Benjamin F. Moon-maw, later the stalwart preacher, who refused to carry the whiskey bottle even when asked to do so by his father. Thus early in life he was laying the foundation for that character which later enabled him to stand for the right regardless of how many were on the other side.

"WE'LL HAVE FAMILY WORSHIP THIS MORNING"

"Mother, we'll have family worship this morning" were the strange and unfamiliar words of the head of the family after the Sunday morning breakfast. Those words had never before been said by that drinking father. The wife and children could not understand their meaning, especially when father reached for the family Bible, read from it and then they all bowed in prayer. Such procedure would seem perfectly natural in

many homes, but not so in Dan's home. Shall I tell you the whole story? Very well, here it is.

Dan had taught school many years, but finally was refused a certificate because of drink. Once he had been prosperous and supported his family of a devoted wife and two children. But his funds would not support the family and pay for his liquor. As so often happens the liquor bills were paid, but the wife had to support the family. Dan was going from bad to worse. The worst had come Friday night before this Sunday morning.

After Bible reading and prayer the father told his family of a change about to take place in their home. He reviewed his past life, confessed his long neglect of wife and children, but assured them that from now on it was going to be different. Yes, it would be different. His story ran something like this:

"I have been a poor husband and father. You, dear, have been a faithful member of the Methodist Church. You have borne with me all too long. I am resolved to be a Christian too. As you know, I lean towards the Dunkards. This morning I am going to their meeting eight miles away and ask them to take me into their communion. From now on there will be no money for drink nor shall you longer toil to support the family. You have done too much of that. Never again shall the school children shame our children with the reproach that their father is a drunkard."

Tears came to his own eyes, tears of penitence. Tears came to the eyes of his good wife, tears of

joy, as she said: "God bless you in your noble resolve. I am too happy to say much, but the children and I will do all in our power to help you in your new life. When temptations come, as come they will, come home to us instead of going to the saloon. We'll stand by you."

Dan went to the old Dunkard church. After the services ended he spoke to the minister and made his wants known. Some questioned because they knew Dan and his weakness. They knew that on Friday evening he had thrown himself on the track before a locomotive about to move and had been rescued by onlookers. The minister invited him home for dinner. They talked it over. Dan showed every evidence of sincerity and penitence. He was even willing that they wait a short time until he could prove his sincerity before baptism. He was taken into the church. He became a sober man. His wife no longer needed to take in washing to pay the rent. Theirs was a new home because the father became a saved man. He never drank again. He supported the family. He paid for the home. At times he entered a saloon, but not to drink. He entered to help some weaker fellow who was still in the chains of strong drink. Dan lived and died a redeemed man, a man born again. His wife knew it; his children knew it; his creditors knew it—all knew it.

The gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Paul, the chief of sinners, knew this from personal experience so could say it with his whole heart.

HANDICAPS

EDUCATED HIMSELF

Yelles Cassel did not believe in education. He himself was illiterate; he wanted his children to be illiterate; he forbade their going to school. His theory was: "If you give a child learning, then you make him fit or able to commit a forgery; he may become a counterfeiter or do any other wickedness that he wants to do, which an unlearned, ignorant man would be incapable of doing."

Strange reasoning it may seem to us but to Yelles Cassel that sounded logical. His son, Abraham H., did not hold these same views as to education. He resolved to secure an education. From his sister he learned to spell and from a picture book he learned to read, but his lack of a knowledge of English made that a difficult task.

One day Abraham took a chicken feather and attempted to make a pen with which to write. He did point the feather but did not know that the point should be split. His Uncle George came to the rescue and showed him how and why the pen point must be split. From that time on he taught himself to write and thus was well started on the road not only of learning to write but of becoming a great antiquarian and the outstanding historian of the Church of the Brethren.

Before Abraham was eight years of age he had laid the foundation of a library. He made it a

practice to preserve every scrap of printed matter that came into his possession. Both his parents opposed his practice of buying books just as they did his going to school. But nothing could turn young Abraham from his course. He turned the obstacles placed in his way into steppingstones that led him to world renown.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1908, pp. 21, 23, 25.

THE TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

The poem, The Touch of the Master's Hand, by Myra Brooks Welch, has had a wide circulation. A few facts about the poem and the author not generally known are here recorded.

The author lives at La Verne, California, and is a member of the Church of the Brethren. She is an invalid and writes frequently. Her poems have appeared in various publications. The Touch of the Master's Hand is her best known poem. It was first published in the Gospel Messenger of Feb. 26, 1921. This poem has often been published anonymously and has repeatedly been heard over the radio.

Shortly before the above date Mrs. Welch had read a story that suggested the poem. As she read how a master hand had touched a very ordinary thing and had changed it completely, there ran through her mind a picture and words full of meaning. Without any apparent effort on her part the picture took form and color and she saw and

produced the poem in which a violin that was about to be sold for three dollars finally was sold for \$3,000 because a master violinist tuned it and showed its true value.

Mrs. Welch's son is a Y. M. C. A. secretary in the Orient. On one occasion a speaker delivered an impressive address, closing with this poem, saying that he prized the poem but did not know its author. What was his surprise at the close of the meeting to be confronted by a young man deeply moved and scarcely able to speak the words: "My mother wrote that poem."

Her poems have appeared in book form as follows: *The Years Between*, 1929; *Dorcas*, 1930; *High Songs*, 1933; *The Touch of the Master's Hand*, 1941.

Source: *Gospel Messenger*, Oct. 18, 1941, pp. 3, 4.

THIRTEEN DAYS IN SCHOOL

William Strickler was born in Miami County, Ohio, in 1819, was left fatherless at three and was bound out to a hard master. Because of extremely harsh treatment he ran away at fourteen and set out for himself. His formal schooling was limited to just thirteen days. What little he learned in that short time neither made nor spoiled him. Experience became his lifelong teacher and William learned his lessons well. He early united with the Methodist Church but at the age of twenty-three cast his lot with the Brethren. In 1858 he brought his family to Appanoose County,

Iowa, where within a few years he was called to the ministry.

Taking the ministry seriously he applied himself studiously to Bible study and became well informed on its teachings. He had a good command of English, was sincere in his message, had the voice of a lion and preached with his whole being. When he spoke folks heard and understood his message. He was wont to call himself the Methodist Dunkard preacher. He had the old Methodist zeal and was deeply in love with the Brethren doctrine.

In his day the religious debate was common. All denominations engaged in it. Once a Christian minister announced that on a certain Sunday morning he would show his audience wherein the Brethren were not following New Testament teaching. Being interested in the subject Strickler went to hear him, for the two things he liked above all else were preaching and debating.

The sermon over and the closing hour at hand, Strickler announced that he would reply to the sermon at a certain time and place. The minister kindly offered his afternoon appointment in his own house as he was eager to hear the reply. The offer was accepted and arrangements were completed. The appointed time having arrived Strickler was on hand for the service and the minister took a seat where he could face the speaker and hear every word of the sermon. At first he listened intently, but before the sermon was over he held his head in his hands and face away from

the speaker. His own comment was: "I never in all my life received such a licking as Brother Strickler gave me."

Source: History Church of the Brethren, Southern Iowa, pp. 37, 38.

PHYSICAL INFIRMITIES PROVED A BLESSING

We crave health and strength and deplore physical infirmities and sickness, forgetting that Grace Noll Crowell and Myra Brooks Welch probably could not write their great poems were it not for their physical handicaps. Only recently did I learn that Henry Kurtz was in part led to publishing the *Gospel Visitor* because of his infirmities. The *Visitor* made its monthly appearances from April 1851 till the last number, December 1873. The story is told by James Quinter in his last *Visitor* editorial.

"Twenty-three years ago brother Kurtz feeling his inability owing to his infirmities, to travel and perform the labors in the ministry as he had been doing, and still being desirous of tendering himself useful to the church, conceived the idea of a periodical for the defense and spread of the truth. The *Gospel Visitor* was then started by him. The difficulties and discouragements he met with in commencing the enterprise were many. His patrons were few, and many of the brethren doubting the propriety of the work, not only withheld their support, but discouraged the undertaking."

But Henry Kurtz had an ideal and bent all his

energies towards making his ideal real. He had faith, patience and perseverance, and with these to support him he toiled on, though he had only three hundred subscribers to begin with. He had learned not to despise the day of small things. Neither was he afraid of hard work. His support was small but his hopes were great and that made a world of difference.

Source: Gospel Visitor, December 1873, p. 379.

MORE STORIES

“TELL THEM MY STORY”

Before Frank B. Heckman sailed for China, where he gave his life for missions, he told me the following which I give largely as he said it:

“I will soon sail for China. Not knowing what is before me or when we may meet again, I want to give you a page out of my own life. It may help others. I was young, and like other young fellows was not always wise in choosing my associates. I was beginning to associate with a group of boys who were headed in the wrong direction. Father and mother saw it and were troubled, but what could they do?

“One day J. G. Royer, that great soul who understood the heart of a boy, came into our home. His eyes were ever looking for boys and girls for Mount Morris College. He had a confidential talk with father and mother. They agreed that I needed a new environment and decided I should go to Mount Morris College. I was not anxious to go—but went. Going to college gave me new associates, a new perspective and changed my life. I will ever be grateful to them for breaking into my life as they did.

“And now, Brother Miller, we must part. You may meet boys like myself. I hope you will find their fathers and mothers concerned for them as my parents were for me, and that you will get

hold of those boys as Brother Royer got hold of me. Tell them my story whenever you have a chance."

Brethren colleges are daily doing for other boys and girls what was done for Frank B. Heckman. Wise are those parents who set a greater value on their boys and girls than on their material possessions and who are more eager to fill the lives of their children with noble ideals than to fill their pockets with money.

A SEMINARY EXPERIENCE

In their preparation for the ministry seminary students prepare and deliver class sermons as a part of their regular work. These sermons are subject to criticism on the part of students and teachers. When D. W. Kurtz was a student in Yale Divinity School his teacher suggested that he deliver a sermon setting forth the faith and practice of the Church of the Brethren as few in the class knew much about that denomination. That was a big order for a short sermon. Kurtz accepted the suggestion, sketched the origin of the church, set forth its faith and practice including the New Testament ordinances as understood and practiced by the Church of the Brethren. After the sermon came the period of criticism.

Much of what had been presented was new to the class. They had never heard of some of those things and their own practices were quite different. The usual criticisms having been offered, one

student remarked: "I am surprised that Mr. Kurtz would belong to a church that washes feet." This led to further discussion and gave Kurtz a chance for fuller explanation. Finally the time came for the teacher to offer his criticism, which was something like the following:

He himself had suggested the subject to Mr. Kurtz because he believed it should be presented. Mr. Kurtz had given a concise, clear and forceful statement of the faith and practice of his church. He hoped that each of the class could do equally well, were he to present the faith and practice of his church. Kurtz had spoken like a man that believed in his denomination. He had dedicated his life to his Lord and the Christian ministry, seeing fit to render his service through the Church of the Brethren. Every denomination needs young men in the ministry who know and believe in and love and can defend the faith and practice of their church as Mr. Kurtz had just done.

NO BETTER WAY

E. S. Young, long-time Bible teacher, once told me that when he was a student in Yale Divinity School, under Dr. Harper the class studied the thirteenth chapter of John's gospel. In the course of the discussion a student asked whether he thought Jesus meant to teach feet washing according to the record of John.

"No," said Dr. Harper, "I do not think that Jesus meant to teach feet washing on that occasion, but

if he had meant to do so he could have taught it in no better way than the way in which it is recorded in this chapter by John."

That great educator's answer is easily understood. It apparently says just what he meant. I see no reason why he should be misunderstood. Likewise the words of Jesus on that eventful night regarding feet washing are easily understood—both what he did and what he said. It would seem reasonable that on such a solemn occasion he would say and do just what he meant to say and do and would so state it all that generations later reading the account could readily get his meaning.

THEIR FIRST AND SECOND MEETING

Henry Kurtz had been trained for the Lutheran ministry before he left Germany for America in 1817. On board the vessel in which he sailed he met Henry Reubsome, who had been trained for the Catholic priesthood. Somehow each found in the other something that drew them together. A friendship mutually agreeable developed. When they landed at New York these two men who had met as strangers, whose religion was so different, parted as fast friends and their friendship continued.

Years passed. Again they met but in a different place and under different conditions—at an Annual Meeting of the Church of the Brethren. And would you believe it? They were both members of and ministers in that church. When they died

they were buried, each near his own home in Ohio, Kurtz near Poland and Reubsome near Springfield.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1887, p. 19.

"I'VE GOT IT"

Brethren are not very emotional in their religion. They have been charged at times of being too cold. Some have claimed that the Brethren are lacking in emotion and that they do not always have that religious experience which enables them to point to the day, the hour, the very place where they were "saved." Be that as it may, we do have the record of the experience of James Quinter at the time of his conversion. His daughter, Mary, who died on the mission field in India, says:

".... meetings for public worship were held in the schoolhouses, and prayer meetings were held in their homes. During a meeting held in the old Green Tree schoolhouse, he was convicted and his mind was aroused upon the subject of his salvation. It engaged his thoughts deeply for a time, and one day as he was working in the barn he suddenly stopped, exclaiming, 'I've got—I've got it,' and ran into the house. 'I've got it—peace with God.' He was baptized in the Coventry church. He was at this time in his seventeenth year."

In January 1888 Brother Quinter went back to the old Green Tree congregation and held a series of meetings. In an editorial he reviewed his early

days in that community, speaking of Green Tree, Lumberville, Phoenixville, of John Umstad, Isaac Price, George Price, S. Suplee and A. Fitzwater. Nor does he pass by "Father" Groover and "Father" Woolsley, two prominent Methodist traveling ministers. All these left their imprint on his life. He speaks of that section as the place where prayer meetings and protracted meetings began in the brotherhood.

While he had expected some day to be called to the ministry, the call came sooner than he had expected. Of his training for the ministry he says:

"Our prayer meetings that we held in the beginning of the church here, afforded us very good opportunities for exercising our gifts. While those meetings were excellent promoters of our spiritual life, they were good schools for our improvement in many ways. In these meetings we exercised somewhat freely, as did the brethren and sisters generally. We were asked at times, by the ministering brethren, to assist some in the more public services."

Sources: Life and Sermons of Elder James Quinter, pp. 17, 18. Gospel Messenger, Feb. 7, 1888, pp. 88, 89.

"HELLO, PARSON"

For many years C. E. Gillett was a pioneer preacher on the plains of Arizona. He enjoyed a wide acquaintance and met all classes. Cowboys, gamblers and drunks often sat in his audience. At a banquet at Camp Verde he related the following

incident when he was unexpectedly called on for a few words dealing with pioneer days:

"Some of the older ones among you remember a man who used to live here by the name of Ben Snyder. He did not believe in man, God, nor the devil, yet he sometimes attended our church. It so happened that one time when I was freighting from Prescott to Camp Verde . . . I found a man lying down and wallowing in the mud like a hog. He looked up and seeing me said,

"Hello, there, parson, don't you know me?"

"I said, 'No.'

"He replied, 'You ought to know me, for you converted me.'

"I answered, 'You look like some of *my* work. If the *Lord* had converted you, you would not be lying there wallowing like a hog.'"

Source: Pioneering, pp. 111, 112.

"I DON'T FEEL RIGHT"

Once David E. Price and another brother were soliciting funds for a worthy cause. After stating their mission to a certain brother he reached into his pocket and gave them ten dollars. They accepted the amount, which was really more than they thought he would give. Thanking him for his gift they drove on further and in less than an hour again passed this same farm home only to see the man hanging on the gate awaiting their arrival.

What did he want? They both concluded that

he felt he had given too much, and between them agreed to give him back the ten dollars, should he ask for them. Driving close to the fence they halted and awaited his approach. Just as they had expected, that gift was bothering him.

"Brethren," said he, "I don't feel right about what I gave you this morning."

"Very well," was their reply. "We want you to be satisfied. We want only as much as you are willing to give and we also want you to feel good after giving. We will return the entire amount or any part that you desire."

"Oh, that is not my trouble. I don't feel right because I did not give more. Put this additional amount to what I gave you this morning. I think I'll feel better now." And he placed a second gift into their hands.

I haven't the least doubt concerning the feelings of the poor widow who gave her two mites, but I have often wondered how the rich folks felt after Jesus stated his estimate of their gifts.

SUNDAY SCHOOL IN A BARN

Daniel Vaniman was always a step or two ahead of the crowd, but he never lost step with the crowd. And that is what differentiates the reformer who succeeds from the fanatic who fails. The reformer takes folks with him; the fanatic marches alone.

Vaniman believed in Sunday school; the Pleasant Hill congregation near Virden, Illinois, was

not yet ready for Sunday school. Vaniman was eager to prepare them for the change. But how could it be done? Certainly not by driving them—folks always resent being driven. It chanced that he had just built a new barn. Why not use it? He asked the church whether there would be any objection if he would allow the folks to gather in his barn on Sunday, without interfering with the preaching hours, and engage in Bible study. Of course, there could be no objection to that proposition. Did not the Church of the Brethren stress Bible reading and study? And so it was arranged and during the summer months the people met to study the Bible in this new barn.

Fall came on, as it has a way of coming after each summer, and the barn being without heat was too cold a place even for Bible study. What next? Folks had become interested in this barn Bible study. Vaniman again appealed to the church and asked whether it would be possible to continue Bible study at the meetinghouse during the cold of winter. All were agreed for many were attending the study. And so the Bible school ran through the winter.

Spring returned and with it the warmer weather. Again Vaniman proposed to take the Bible study group to his barn. This time, however, there was opposition. He could no longer have his way about the matter. He had sold the Sunday school to the congregation and it remained in the meetinghouse—sold it by ignoring the name and retaining the essence, by going the second mile and

offering to do even more than the people were willing that he should do.

FASTING

In speaking of the life and habits of her sainted father, James Quinter, his daughter, Mary, who died on the India mission field, refers to his habit of fasting, mentioning special occasions.

Family worship was taken for granted in their home and was observed before breakfast. She soon learned that her father did not always eat breakfast. On inquiry she was told that he was fasting. To him some things were more important than eating his regular breakfast. This was a habit he formed early in his ministry and continued throughout life.

When he had special work or was faced with a hard problem he fasted for a day that he might the better study the problem and more nearly arrive at a proper solution.

In his day Annual Meeting was held at a fixed time, Pentecost. To him Good Friday was a sacred day on which, through fasting, he made special preparation for the Annual Conference, of which he was a regular attendant, was long its secretary, and died while leading the assembly in prayer at North Manchester in 1888. With most of us fasting is a lost art. Quinter found blessings in his days of fasting.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1903, p. 11.

FAILED, BUT—

When Henry Kurtz cast his lot with the Brethren it was a most serious blow to his father-in-law, who was a staunch Lutheran, as was Kurtz himself until he began to question some of the teachings of his church. The father-in-law grieved much and left no stone unturned to win Henry back. Finally he enlisted the help of Frederick P. Loehr, who was a schoolteacher, a staunch Lutheran and a cousin of Mrs. Kurtz.

Warned to beware, because he would find "him [Kurtz] as subtle as a snake," Loehr set out fully prepared to meet his antagonist. Yes, his pockets were crammed with papers which he was sure would convince Kurtz of the error of his way. Together they spent two days canvassing every phase of the situation. Each put forth his strongest arguments for his own church. Kurtz was so thoroughly established that he could not be moved. One writer says that Kurtz "knocked the props out from under him" [Loehr]. After two days of discussion Loehr bade the family good-by and started homeward. But he did not go alone as he had come. There sat with him in the saddle those unanswerable arguments that Kurtz had presented, and they worried him.

After he had gone eight miles towards home he halted his horse, faced about and returned to the Kurtz home, to the great surprise of the inmates. But what was their further surprise on learning his mission. He had come back to be baptized by

Kurtz and to become a member of the Church of the Brethren. He had failed on his mission, but succeeded in a greater mission. You will recall that Saul of Tarsus had set out for Damascus with his pockets crammed with papers to arrest the Christians. He reached Damascus but he never arrested one Christian—he became one.

Frederick P. Loehr became an elder in the Church of the Brethren. He was a preacher of some note and often served on Standing Committee. He was a small man with heavy black beard frosted with gray, nearsighted, had a strong voice and was a good singer. He was a frequent contributor to the church publications.

Sources: Gospel Messenger, February 2, 1901, pp. 68, 72. Brethren Family Almanac, 1887, p. 19.

“BAPTIZE ME AS JESUS WAS”

There may have been a time when ministers laid too much stress on the form of baptism; they certainly do not overstress it today. I have just read from the Brethren at Work, October 28, 1876, the following account written by Daniel P. Saylor, staunch veteran of the cross:

“I once witnessed the baptism of fifteen adults, members of the United Brethren church, who were determined to be baptized in the water. It was in the winter, and very cold. The presiding elder failed to convince them of the uselessness of the act. Into the water they would go and so must he. The first one being asked by the elder,

“‘Brother, what is your mode of baptism?’

“‘On my knees, three times face forward,’ was the prompt reply.

“He was so immersed. The second one, a sister, was asked,

“‘Sister, what is your mode of baptism?’

“‘I want you to baptize me as Jesus was,’ was her reply.

“The assembled witnesses waited anxiously to see what that mode would be. Our anxiety, however, was speedily relieved by his taking her to a proper depth of water, and having her kneel down, and he immersed her three times face forward.”

“YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU”

Before C. C. Ellis became president of Juniata College and while he was teaching in that institution one of the Pennsylvania state colleges sought his services and offered him considerable advance in salary. Besides, he would have less of a teaching load and would be permitted to lecture and preach as much as he desired and as opportunity offered, this additional remuneration to be all his own.

To change would afford a wide field for service by opening many doors that were then closed to him. The proposition was taken under consideration and the pros and cons were seriously weighed. Before making a final decision he consulted one of his professors at Princeton University, laying before him the two fields of education

open to him. After the Princeton professor had heard the whole story he said in substance: "Do not make the change. The state school can secure many men to do its work, for it has a wide territory from which to draw. It can easily find a man for the place. Your own church and school are more limited in their territory. They need the very best men they can secure. Theirs is a narrower field. You are doing a fine piece of work where you are. You are serving your church and school in a way that is unique. Serve your own school and church and in this way you will make the largest possible contribution. Your church needs you."

And so they parted. The Princeton man went back to his university; Ellis stayed at Juniata, later becoming its president. His contribution to his college, his church and to the world broadened and he has never had cause to regret that he did not choose the easier job.

YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS

A certain public school was having trouble with the discipline of its students. Things were going from bad to worse. The board appealed to the state inspector for advice. His advice was: "Go to — and secure their school principal and your problem will be solved." They secured that principal, who found conditions even worse than he had anticipated. But he was equal to the occasion. Two of the churches of the town had a

meeting under the direction of the men's organization. They asked the new principal to deliver the address of the evening. Here are a few things he said:

"During the school week I see my little daughter about one-half hour in the morning and about two and one-half hours in the evening, while her teacher has her six hours each day. . . . I do not want my child taught for six hours a day by a teacher who is not morally straight, and does not take a positive stand on religious matters. . . .

"The school has had to assume more and more of the training of children, partially because the fathers and mothers are too busy and more often because the parents do not take the time.

"With the coming of the automobile and the passing of the horse and buggy also went the family altar. We would not return to the horse and buggy days, but I covet for my little girl the fellowship I used to enjoy on those Sunday evening rides home from church with my parents, two brothers and a sister. Especially do I remember those stormy nights when it was so dark we could not see our horse. I always felt a little safer if my father and mother would sing, 'Lead me gently home, Father, lead me gently home.' I also covet for my little girl the vision I had of my parents the first year I was away from home. Regardless of all influences, Sunday nights my mind always turned to that little white country church and I could see in my imagination in the third row from the front on the left side my dad

and mother with heads bowed in prayer. I knew they were praying to a kind Father in heaven somehow to protect their boy and return him safely to them.

"Contrast this picture with the picture some children have of their parents on Sunday nights or any other night and you see the school has to assume a large amount of responsibility for the character education of the children. Perhaps the least a principal can do is to see that every girl on the faculty is always a lady and every man a gentleman.

"A few days ago when I asked several colleges to submit applicants for a vacancy in our school, I insisted first, that the girl be a lady and second, that she be a good teacher."

I knew that teacher when he was a babe in his mother's arms. I know his parents and the Church of the Brethren congregation in which they were active members. I can readily understand why he is the kind of a teacher that he is and why he holds to such sound fundamentals in training children. May his kind multiply.

Why this reference and quotation to the remarks of a teacher you do not know? Because his case is a fine example of the training that has been so resultful in Brethren homes. I hear echoes that even Brethren are slipping in home training. One thing I do know: The number of young Brethren who have slipped from Brethren peace principles may well cause one to pause

and reflect. The long periods in which children are not under parental influence, but are under the influence of teachers who hold popular views regarding war, drink, divorce and moral character, have had much to do with this change of attitude. Homes in which the Bible is read, revered and taught as it deals with the above items, congregations in which these doctrines are stressed when applicants for church membership are instructed, Sunday-school classes in which the teachers give no uncertain sound on distinctive Brethren practices are still mighty factors in so instilling the truth in the minds of folks that they never get away from it.

Today we hold that whatever we want boys and girls to learn, whatever we want them to become—these things must be put into the schools. All well and good. On the other hand, whatever parents want their children to learn, whatever they want them to become, these they must instill while the children are young and in the home. Yes, and whatever the church and the Sunday school wish the church, the home and school to be in the next generation they must implant in the membership now.

HE DIED IN ACTION

Samuel W. Hoover was born in 1837, married in 1860, entered the ministry in 1882 and became foreman of the Book and Tract Committee when it was authorized by Annual Meeting in 1885.

He had a smile for everyone, had unusual business ability and found his chief joy in serving his Lord and helping his fellow men. He loved work and often expressed the desire that when his time came to leave this world it might be while he was still in action.

His prayer was answered even beyond his expectation. On March 10, 1895, he filled the pulpit of the West Dayton church, Ohio, where he was serving as pastor, and delivered the morning message. In the afternoon he prepared his sermon for the evening, apparently in his usual state of health. His text that evening was, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Strong in spirit, he spoke his message effectively. As he came to the close of his sermon he said, "One by one we are passing over." The sermon ended. So did his life, for with those words his spirit departed and they carried the dead minister from the pulpit. His life prayer was answered.

Source: Brethren Family Almanac, 1898, pp. 13, 15.

GETTING READY FOR DEATH

It was my good fortune to be on intimate terms with D. L. Miller. He returned from his last world pilgrimage in poor health. He consulted the best physicians and surgeons. They told him he was in bad condition and that it would be necessary for him to cease preaching and lecturing. In short, if he would live he must cease work. One evening as I left the college office for home, as I passed his

house he asked me in. When we were both seated he said something like this:

"John, the doctors tell me that health conditions demand absolute rest—no work from now on. If I continue to work my days are sure to be very few."

"What will you do about it?" I inquired.

"I am going right on preaching and lecturing. If I can do nothing I have no reason for living. I am in the Lord's work and am ready to put myself in his hands. He will do what he knows is best."

He did that very thing, living and working a number of years. The Lord took care of him. He called for the anointing and was greatly comforted from the service.

Later he again came to me and said:

"John, I am thinking of selling my home and disposing of my library and curios. What do you think of it?"

"Before I can answer that question intelligently, father, tell me why you propose this course. My answer may be modified considerably if I know your mind."

"Well, John, mother and I are getting older. My health is not what it once was. Naturally I expect to die some day. I have been preparing myself for that time. I love my home, my books, my curios. They are all a part of my life. The Lord has been good, very good to mother and myself. I have viewed life as a period of service and a period of getting ready for the other world which

will be much better than this good world. I want to wean myself of all the things that may hold me to this world when the time of my departure is at hand. Home, books, curios—I want to have nothing dear to me here to pull me back when the Lord calls me to glory."

"Under these conditions," said I, "sell the home, dispose of the books and curios as you have proposed, continue to set your affections on things above and you will find death a welcome visitor."

As I officiated at his funeral I could not help but mention the wise way in which Brother Miller had prepared for the end.

